

UNDEFEATED
BAHAMUT
CHRONICLE

バ
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ム
ト

最弱無敗の

神上機龍

18

明月千里
SENRI AKATSUKI
●村上ゆいち
YUICHI MURAKAMI





「今はもっと
休んでください。
私の身体で」

「ちよっ、
ローザ」

「大丈夫ですわあ。
それより——」

ローザが陶醉した微笑を浮かべつつ、
唇を寄せてくる。



「いくわよ、お姫様」

「今なら**投降**を許すぞ、
クルルシファー」

新王国の主力であるリーシャと、
ルクス側に唯一残った戦力である
クルルシファーが対峙していた。



Character



ルクス・アーカディア

滅亡したアーカディア帝国の皇子。
『無敗の最弱』と呼ばれる機竜使い。



リースシャルテ・アティスマータ

アティスマータ新王国の王女。^{あか}朱の^{せんき}戦姫と呼ばれる。
神装機竜《ティアマト》の使い手。



フィルフィ・アイングラム

アイングラム財閥の次女。ルクスの幼馴染みで学園長の妹。
神装機竜《テュポーン》の使い手。



クルルシファー・エインフォルク

北の大国、ユミル教国からの留学生であるクラスメイト。
神装機竜《ファフニール》の使い手。



アイリ・アーカディア

旧帝国の皇族の生き残り。
一年生で、ルクスの実の妹。



セリスティア・ラルグリス

^{シヴァレス}『騎士団』団長、学園最強の三年生。四大貴族の公爵家
令嬢で、神装機竜《リンドヴルム》の使い手。



切姫夜架

『帝国の凶刃』と呼ばれた暗殺者の少女。ルクスを主と
認め、仕えている。神装機竜^{ヤトノカミ}《夜刀ノ神》の使い手。



フギル・アーカディア

ラフィ女王に仕え、『世界改変』完遂のために暗躍する。
改変機竜《ウロボロス》を駆る、謎多き強者。

World

装甲機竜《ドラグライド》

遺跡から発掘された、古代兵器。

その中でも希少種であり、高い性能を持つものは、神装機竜と呼ばれる。

また、装甲機竜の使い手は、機竜使い《ドラグナイト》と呼ばれる。

遺跡《ルイン》

世界に七つ発見された古代遺跡。装甲機竜《ドラグライド》が発掘されたため、国力を左右する重要な存在として、各国間で縄張り争いが起きている。

幻神獣《アビス》

遺跡から現れる謎の幻獣。人類の脅威であり、機竜使いのみが対抗できる。

終焉神獣《ラグナレク》

ひとつの遺跡に対し一匹のみ存在するという、超常の力を秘めた七匹の幻神獣。

『黒き英雄』

正体不明の装甲機竜《ドラグライド》を使い、たった1機で帝国の装甲機竜の約1200機を倒したと言われる伝説の英雄。

アティスマータ新王国

リースシャルテの父であるアティスマータ伯が、アーカディア帝国に対して行ったクーデターによって、五年前に建国された国。

アーカディア旧帝国

世界の五分之一を束ねていた大国。世界最強と謳^{うた}われた、圧倒的な軍事力を背景に圧政を敷いていたが、クーデターによって滅ぼされた。

ルクスとアイリは、この帝国の皇族の生き残り。

七竜騎聖

年々高まる幻神獣の脅威に対抗し、世界協定に加盟した各国から選出された、代表の機竜使いたち。【大聖域】での最終決戦で敗北、瓦解している。

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Prologue

Gear of Fate

「Lizharte. You will succeed the unfulfilled will of your father, the great hero Atismata, and become the princess of the New Kingdom. That is the responsibility that you ought to take up.」

The voice felt really far away, like it was something that happened a really long time ago.

However, she was able to remember this memory of five years ago vividly like it was only yesterday.

Inside the stone castle that was burnt along with the crumbling of the Old Empire.

Prime Minister Nulph who was her father's adjutant at that time rescued Lisha from the hidden passage inside the well and told her that.

「.....」

At that time Lisha didn't understand.

She who was taken hostage was abandoned by her father. After that she betrayed her father because she didn't want to die.

The inerasable mark of her submission toward the Old Empire was remaining in her body.

How could her current self introduce herself as a princess who succeeded her father's dying will?

However, if she refused this then Lisha would have nowhere to go.

She could only let herself being toyed around by fate. Like that she gradually settled into her position as princess.

Her real self that wished to be saved by someone.

The wound of her heart from being abandoned by the father she trusted.

Lisha who felt hatred inside her heart toward the title as the great hero's orphan immersed herself into developing and using Drag-Ride.

She could only deceive her current self by doing that.

Because she believed that she didn't have any qualification to correctly lead the New Kingdom as the daughter of the great hero.

At the surface she acted as Crimson War Princess, the leader of the new generation, but she was actually suffering inside.

Someone who knew and able to accept her real self, someone who she could trust.

She wanted such existence all this time.

Then Lisha encountered that young man.

「Lu, x.....?」

While it felt like the time was stopping for eternity, snow was fluttering down at the surrounding.

It was a romantic snowy landscape within the Ancient Forest.

The true indentify of the Drag-Knight who was giving instruction to her little sister—Alma who should be the leader of Azure Division that proclaimed war to the New Kingdom.

Lisha even doubted this definite reality, wondering if it might be a deception.

The young man before her eyes. Lux, the one who Lisha trusted the most, was none other than the ringleader who carried out this coup d'etat. This scene was telling her that.

「Is this, some kind of mistake? What am I, seeing right now?」

「.....」

It was like the time was still stopping. The young man in front of her wasn't moving.

His body didn't stir at the slightest, he was unable to.

「Are you, betraying me and Haha-ue?」

Was Lux under the manipulation of someone else, or perhaps—.

How comfortable it would be if she could believe that?

But, the grim look that appeared on Lux's expression when Lisha called to him told her that this was the truth.

「Answer me Lux! Did you do this!? In order to destroy the New Kingdom」

「-.....!」

In contrast Lux couldn't say anything back.

His plan to hide his true identity till the end and took down Sacred Eclipse without Lisha ever learning about it was already crumbling.

However, he was unable to tell the truth and persuade Lisha while she was under the effect of world revision.

In the first place, he also didn't know whether the binding on Lisha's perception had been dispelled or not, and even if the binding was dispelled he didn't want to tell her the truth.

If he did that, Lisha who finally obtained a family would become burdened by even more tragic fate.

She would be forced to take down her step mother who was possessed by the Ruin's system called Sacred Eclipse with her own hand like that.

Was there no other choice but to tell Lisha everything, persuade her, tell her to kill her mother, and placed even more shackle of sin on her?

The answer that he derived at the end of his complication was—.



「You are.....an impostor. There is no way, that Lux will betray me and Haha-ue..... You're, fake!」

Something that looked like red vapor surged out from Lisha's body. She pulled out her Sword Device from her belt.

Seeing that abnormality, Lux realized that it was the power of physical strengthening that she obtained from Baptism.

At the same time, he also realized that she was seeing him as enemy and she would face him with all her strength.

「——Awaken, founding ancestor. O dragon king of the gods who formed an army by your lonesome. Tiamat!」

A huge crimson Divine Drag-Ride was summoned before Lisha's eyes. It split into countless parts.

「——Connect On!」

And then, it transformed into armor that covered Lisha's whole body. Its movement made mechanical sound that sounded like a roar.

「Hero-dono, please——escape from here for now!」

Seeing that, Lisha's little sister Alma urged Lux to retreat in panic.

But, it was too slow.

「Alma! Get away!」

Lux somehow gave that instruction within the short time before unsheathing his Sword Device and lifting it up.

He would summon the Divine Drag-Ride Bahamut and wore it in order to confront Lisha and held her back.

That day when Lux first came to the academy, the two of them also fought.

The curtain of the stage was opened once more, as though to trace the beginning that was their encounter.

Chapter 1

Countdown to Destruction

「This is troubling nanodesu. Strange interruption that isn't in the plan is butting in..... Furthermore, the binding of world revision is still working on them right?」

An Automata girl with mechanical ears that looked like rabbit ears. The Gear Leader who managed the Arc, La Cruche looked at the girl who was confronting her and spat out that complaint.

Her current master, Raffi ordered her to erase the traitor of New Kingdom, Airi Arcadia. The one who rescued her erasure target from the crisis was a Seven Dragon Paladins from other country, Rosa Granhide.

「Interruption eh. That means you guys are doing something suspicious just as I thought then? Perhaps even the story that Captain Magialca's aide told me is also unexpectedly true?」

Due to Fugil's Transforming Drag-RideArtifact , Uroboros, the Seven Dragon Paladins other than Lux and Magialca were made to misunderstand that the whole battle had been over after the decisive battle in the abandoned capital Guernica.

But, Aeril was kidnapped and the Grand Force of the Garden was stolen after that. And so the situation changed completely.

To investigate the action of Queen Raffi who was secretly maneuvering and rewriting people's consciousness, Magialca skillfully manipulated the remaining Seven Dragon Paladins and guided them to the Ancient Forest. As the result, she succeeded making them Lux's ally like this.

The people who Lux fought together with or fought against until now.

He obtained their unshakable trust from that. That was Lux's true strength.

It was the result that was won over by Lux's caliber as king.

「Haa, this is troubling nanodesu. Even though you were left alive in order to maintain the world's equilibrium. Well, it's also fate if you get

killed here nanodesu. However, right now——」

With a tone of someone playing dumb, La Cruche commanded the flying type Divine Drag-Ride she was wearing——Vouivre that was decorated by gems to fly toward Airi who Rosa protected behind her.

「Tsu.....!?!」

Seeing that, Airi immediately turned around and started running in her pilot suit.

「Dealing with that traitor is the priority.」

La Cruche readied her extendable Blade and aimed at Airi's back.

「You think I'll let you?」

Rosa's Gorynych pursued in order to protect Airi. She brandished her Scythe and swung down to block the attack, it was then,

「Good grief, nanodesu.」

The slash of the huge scythe that drew a sharp arc literally cut through empty air disappointingly.

「.....Wha!?!」

The attack that came from the enemy's blind spot and should be undetectable was dodged by La Cruche without even her looking back.

Vouivre's Divine Raiment, True Eyes could read about particular matter in the heart of the target.

Would they move right or left after this?

Would they escape or fight?

This Divine Raiment would read the reaction of the heart in regard to such specific question.

What La Cruche specified as the target of the mind reading was the trajectory of the Scythe that Rosa wielded.

La Cruche and Vouivre headed straight toward Airi. The slash then came in a trajectory to mow her from behind.

She showed a movement that matched Rosa's prediction, and then by using feint just before the attack hit, she made Rosa's attack to hit empty air.

「No-! Nii-san, save me!」

「Unfortunately, now that you've become the New Kingdom's enemy, that wish won't come true. You should resent your big brother who only has useless comrade nanodesu.」

She expanded her retractable Blade until the maximum length and thrust the blade toward Airi's back like a spear.

Just as she thought that the heart would be definitely pierced from the back—, she didn't feel any respond of her attack hitting.

「.....What!?!」

「Useless comrade you sayy..... I'll throw back exactly those words back at you.」

In an instant, Gorynych's Scythe horizontally slashed Vouivre's back.

「Ku.....!」

She barely escaped danger by making a sharp turn above, but she completely lost sight of Airi's back.

「Just now.....I see, it's the phantom created by Gorynych's special armament, Sin Phantom.」

Even if La Cruche read Rosa's heart with Vouivre's Divine Raiment, she was unable to read multiple thoughts in one sitting.

In the end she could only obtain the answer regarding the matter that she specified.

「I'll say this now, I have seen your fight just now you knoww. A mere machine want to win against human in deceit, it's a thousand years too early for you.」

「.....I see, so you have the skill to introduce yourself as the representative of your country at least nanodesu.」

The real Airi was already escaping from the forest together with Noct who was unable to equip her Drag-Ride anymore.

In that case, she wouldn't be able to pursue after Airi without defeating this Rosa first.

La Cruche made that judgment and turned the switch in her heart.

「So you want to die that much nanodesu. Then—I'll grant your wish.」

The Automata girl took a fighting stance with Vouivre's Blade and proclaimed so.

「You....., how long you're going to get in my way desu——」

And then, on the other hand.

Just a slight distance away from the location where Rosa and La Cruche were fighting.

Re Plica who was also an Automata that managed the Ruin Moon was facing Soffice who saved Alma from her attack and let the girl escaped.

The Drag-Ride that Re Plica was wearing was the land battle type Divine Drag-Ride, Gargoyle.

Soffice had a good relation with her like sisters in the past, but that Divine Drag-Ride's ability and disposition were unknown to her.

「That is, my line..... As I thought, without me, you're no good.」

「Nonsense desu. Furthermore, I don't need the like of you desu. As long as we have a master to guide us!」

She yelled. At the same time Gargoyle accelerated explosively and skated on the ground.

She lifted the large Halberd on her hand and swung it down in a straight line toward Soffice and Vritra.

「Tsu.....! Mahaprana!」

It was Vritra's Divine Raiment that freely controlled every material as well as energy's trajectory.

Using that, she easily dodged the opponent's attack and took their back.

The instant Re Plica exposed her defenseless back, Sophia struck at the shoulder of the enemy's armor using her medium sized Blade. —But,

「.....tsu!?!」

Gargoyle smoothly turned around. Sophia's slash cut through air and she was fully hit by the counterattack in the form of a horizontal slash.

DOGUN!

「Uh.....a」

The armored arm that she barely swung up accomplished the role of guard, but it was unable to fully stop the whole power of land battle type Divine Drag-Ride that was more powerful than her Drag-Ride from the start.

She was sent flying to the side and crashed on the tightly grouped up trees several times.

(Just now, what happened.....!?)

Soffice didn't understand how her attack got dodged or when she was hit by counterattack.

But, Re Plica didn't particularly execute special piloting technique of Drag-Ride like Lux.

From how Gargoyle's armor shined just before, she judged that Re Plica used a Divine Raiment without a doubt.

(However, why—)

She didn't mind the fact that she was hit.

Because for Soffice who could easily dodge enemy's attack using Mahaprana, she could recover even after receiving some damage.

However, it was a strange and terrifying danger to not even understand what was done to her.

(If it's just running away, I can, still do that.....)

Soffice was wearing flight type Divine Drag-Ride Vritra.

Against land battle type Gargoyle that Re Plica was wearing, she could one-sidedly attack her using her special armament, the satellite weapon Vajra. As long as her wings flight device were still working, Re Plica shouldn't be able to follow her if she escaped to the sky.

(But—)

If Soffice retreated or fought passively, Re Plica would pursue after Alma once more.

If she escaped right now, there would nobody else who could help Alma.

And then, above all else.

「I don't want to let you who are like my sister to keep acting like that.」

Since Soffice woke up in the Moon as the Key's Supervisor and became all alone, it was this Automat who became her talking partner all this time.

Right now a different master rewrote her memory and she was taking part in an evil deed while boasting that it was justice.

There was no way she could allow such thing to happen.

「Here I come Re Plica. I'm going to take you back.」

Soffice corrected her posture and resolved herself.

She courageously flew into a battle where she was still unable to see the chance of victory.

「Just what is this situation?」

Krulcifer fought at the forefront as a member of Syvalles that was the main force of the New Kingdom. She noticed the strange signs and felt bewildered.

Presently, it should be a battle of New Kingdom versus Azure Division in the Ancient Forest, but there were five battles in progress at the surrounding that weren't a battle between army.

First was the battle between Lux and Lisha in a location near Avalon's underground facility that was called the Archive.

In addition were Greifer and Mel of Seven Dragon Paladins who joined the fight in the middle. They were in the middle of battling Nier and Dawla, the private Drag-Knights of the four great nobles who were guarding the entrance to the Ancient Forest.

And then, Rosa was fighting the Automata La Cruche, while Soffice was against Re Plica. Each of them were fighting fiercely.

But, Krulcifer herself who didn't have the full picture had no way of learning the reason for those five battles.

There was only one mission that she was aware of.

To defeat Azure Division that was the enemy of the New Kingdom, that was all.

But, perhaps because Lux had destroyed the previous world revision and because she herself also had obtained resistance to perception revision due to receiving Baptism,

She was finally beginning to notice the strange situation that was surrounding them right now.

「What is going on? In this forest——」

However, something even more baffling than the five battles she saw just now was occurring.

The Drag-Knights of Azure Division played horn flutes and controlled a swarm of Abyss that appeared from somewhere to join their side.

Because of that the army of New kingdom was pushed back, but those Abysses were swept clean in the blink of eye.

Furthermore it didn't happen because of Drag-Knight, but by the figure of a monster in the form a single girl in the sky that was rampaging to everywhere.

Something was strange.

The plan of someone was moving in a place that Krulcifer didn't know about.

(That——something like that, is an ally of the New Kingdom!? If that's not just my hallucination, then what is happening right now in this country, in this world?)

The inside of her head was prickling. Alarm bell was ringing inside her.

In this situation, if she didn't determine the truth and acted correctly, she along with New Kingdom would perish.

「Lux-kun. If it's you, what're you going to do at this time——?」

Krulcifer's present objective was simple.

It was to defeat as many Drag-Knight of Azure Division and secured Lisha's safety.

After that, it would be the destruction of the enemy army, but if there was a chance to recover Grand Force or Aeryl, she would also do that.

It should be fine to do just that. But——m

『Krulcifer..... Can you, hear me?』

「.....tsu, Celis!?Senpai? Are you safe!?!」

In the next moment, a Dragon Voice communication reached Krulcifer who was going to act.

It was from Celis who fought Lux and fainted but recovered her consciousness just now.

Of course, Krulcifer didn't know about that fact.

Before the start of the battle, Celis's figure vanished from their camp for some reason, but the voice that reached her was oozing with fatigue.

「There is no need for worry. More importantly, I, noticed..... He, Lux is here. My memory, is coming back little by little. The true enemy that we should fight and, what we have to face..... You too, please notice it, if you don't hurry, it'll be too late——」

「What are you, saying? You're——?」

Celis's voice that came through the Drag-Ride had no strength.

But for some reason, Krulcifer herself who was asking back felt a strange persuasiveness from Celis's voice.

「Perhaps, we actually couldn't recall about that day. But, our bond with him is remaining in our heart. That was why, by fighting him, I was able to remember. Search for him.....for Lux, meet him, and talk to him. If you do that then surely, you should be able to remember.」

「.....」

She didn't understand the meaning of Celis's words.

And yet, her chest was astir.

「——Lux-kun, shouldn't be participating in this battle in Ancient Forest.」

「.....Please go. Krulcifer, in order to take back your true self, and then, in order to smash through this deceitful perception, and to fight the true enemy, together with him.」

「Hello, Celis-senpai!？」

The communication with Celis cut off abruptly. Perhaps she had reached her limit.

「I don't, understand.....」

Krulcifer who was being told all that one-sidedly spoke out her feeling.

Lux was in the middle of recuperating in the capital's inn. There was no way he was in this Ancient Forest.

The battle over Avalon should also be over already.

「And yet....., why」

『——Fuu, pretending to be lover while investigating is more tiring than I expected.』

The scenery of the parade together with Lux that shouldn't be in her memory.

『Oh, does Lux-kun hate to be betrothed to me?』

The memory of the two of them walking through the street in the capital was resurrected.

In the end, the chance to confess to Lux didn't come to Krulcifer.

No, there was.

『Then, just let me make a reservation for now. When your criminal collar is taken off, if you can come to meet me as the first thing you do.....』

She was waiting for the young man all this time.

For the time when he noticed her feeling, recognized it, and gave her his reply.

And then, she conveyed it to him.

About the one thing that Krulcifer decided herself, no matter what happened in this world.

『Lux-kun. Just don't forget this one thing. No matter what happen, we—I will be your ally.』

「Tsu.....!」

The residue of fragmentary memory combined like puzzle pieces inside Krulcifer and came back.

「He is here? Lux-kun. In this battlefield——?」

She had to search for him.

She had to save him.

It wasn't her logic, but an impulse that was like an instinct made Krulcifer flew in her Fafnir.

In order to find the answer through all the discomfort and threat lingering in this forest.

On the other hand, also within the Ancient Forest, near the surface of the Archive.

「Airi. Is your body really alright?」

「Yes..... I'm fine Noct.」

Airi who was saved from her predicament by Rosa who suddenly appeared was hiding inside the forest together with Noct wearing pilot suit.

They searched for a rock that was as big as possible, hid in its cover, and snuggled to each other.

They both received damage to their Drag-Ride. Now that they became unable to deploy their Drag-Ride for a while, they could only do this to protect themselves even if it was only for their peace of mind.

「The Seven Dragon Paladins of Heiburg Republic.....Rosa-san, why is she here—no, why did she save us?」

「.....」

「No, more importantly, why was that La Cruche here, and attacked Airi?」

Noct murmured while snuggling close to Airi. In respond Airi couldn't say anything back.

Noct who didn't even receive Baptism most likely would be unable to easily dispel the biding in her perception by Uroboros's world revision.

That was why, Airi was unable to explain the truth to her.

Airi was unable to say that Lux was fighting in order to defeat Queen Raffi who was being possessed by Sacred Eclipse and also in order to save the New Kingdom, or how she was tricking even the Triad and leaked information to the Azure Division.....

「I'm sorry Noct....., right now I can't explain anything to you. I ended up tricking all of you—」

「Is that, something related to Lux-san?」

「.....」

After hesitating for a bit, Airi nodded to that question.

Soon, she would have to part even from this girl who got along well with her since she first enrolled into the academy.

Lux who was perceived as the leader of Azure Division at the surface and she couldn't possibly involve Noct in it.

And then she didn't want to expose this roommate and also best friend of her to even more danger than this.

It might be different if it was someone who recognized the truth and had the resolve to risk their life, but she was unable to involve a friend who didn't know anything and continued using her.

「I'm sorry to say this after this late but, Noct—. From here, can you prioritize your own safety without caring about me? There is something that I have to do no matter what.」

「By that, do you mean to say for us to separate from each other here, in this situation?」

Noct summarized the main point and replied frankly.

Airi nodded silently in affirmation.

But, the answer that came back was different from Airi's imagination.

「Then, I understand. I'll come with Airi. I'll support you till the end.」

「Tsu.....!」

Noct said it with a kind smile that was unusual for her who was always showing a composed expression.

She said that she would cooperate with Airi.

「Why.....is that?」

「Because I want to do that. Is that not enough?」

Noct replied straightforwardly. Even Airi couldn't say anything back to that.

「But, Noct, you have your position to think of—」

「Sharis will scold me if I abandon my irreplaceable friend. Besides, I have to protect the little sister of the person I love.」

「..... That, don't tell me」

Noct spoke it nonchalantly but, she certainly conveyed something to her.

「Yes. I too love Lux-san. Not just as a member of Syvalles and because he is Airi's big brother, but also from my own feeling.」

Perhaps she had the self-awareness that she was saying something that was unlike her, because Noct's cheeks were slightly tinged red.

「When Airi resolve yourself, it's always because you're thinking of Lux-san. Until now I too have been watching Lux-san from the same point of view of Airi who is like that. That's why, surely we're feeling the same.」

「.....Is, that so」

Even with her perception still being bound by the world revision, Noct said that she would support Lux who she didn't even know where he was at right now and Airi who was taking action to protect that Lux.

Just with that, the reason to separate with her was already gone.

「Nii-san too is a bad guy. To monopolize everyone's heart like this. I'll have to punish him a lot later.」

「Yes, let's do that together. That's why, let's survive, Airi. In order to help Lux-san——」

Airi and Noct bought time to rally themselves while calming their breath and watching the fight before their eyes at the same time.

Watching the fight of the people who let their heart went out to Lux just like them——.

「You suddenly become passive aren't you. I wonder if mechanical puppet can also feel fear.」

Rosa drove her Divine Drag-Ride Gorynych and resolutely attacked La Cruche and Vouivre that focused in defense.

「.....Feeling fear? Against the like of you? I don't understand what you're saying nanodesu. They say that the weakest dog bark the loudest but——it seems that apply to you nanodesu.」

But, La Cruche was composed even with Rosa pressuring her.

She thoroughly dealt with every single slash of the Scythe that was swung powerfully while reading Rosa's heart at the same time. She was dissecting her opponent's mentality.

By giving up her pursuit of Airi and narrowing down her target to just one, the precision of Vouivre's True Eyes increased even higher.

『Is Rosa laying out trap?』 Answer—positive.

『 Does that trap make use of her special armament? 』
Answer—positive.

『Does that trap use the fake Rosa as bait?』 Answer—positive.

One by one.

In turn and in order.

La Cruche was analyzing Rosa's thought as well as her tactic as each second passed.

The Gear Leader of the Ark, La Cruche. How long it had been since she last launched the Divine Drag-Ride Vouivre?

Even though she had this Divine Raiment to analyze human's heart, she was unable to save Arshalia, the master who created her.

(Master..... My apologies. Nanodesu.)

In the past of more than a thousand years ago. If only at that time, she was able to see through the wicked heart of the clan of traitor that murdered Arshalia.

Then her benefactor wouldn't die under her very own nose.

The system of Sacred Eclipse also wouldn't get rewritten and poisoned by someone else.

At this point, no one was able to rewrite that system back into the correct state.

They were unable to know the true future that Arshalia wished for.

In that case—La Cruche would protect that belief together with this Avalon.

She would prove that with her strength.

(For the sake of Arshalia-sama who gave me heart!)

She swung her retractable special armament, Roster Edge while fully utilizing her Automata's heart and technique to challenge Rosa.

The enemy was a girl who was made to act the fabricated evil in Heiburg Republic.

She believed in absolute evil but got betrayed. Now it seemed she had changed her target of adoration into Lux.

「Unable to maintain your own self if you don't cling on someone else—you won't be able to defeat me with such weak heart nanodesu.」

「To be preached about heart by a lowly machine. Unfortunately, I'm already familiar with that kind of mental attack that I'm sick of it.」

Rosa snorted at La Cruche's words. She slashed using her Scythe along with Gorynych.

But, La Cruche extended her retractable Blade, Roster Edge and blocked the attack from behind her.

「.....!？」

The special armament of Gorynych.

The twelve unmanned drones, Twelve Vices. Using that, Rosa pretended to assault La Cruche's back while she herself attacked from the front.

To put simply it was a simultaneous attack, but even if La Cruche was reading Rosa's heart, it should be an attack that was hard to dodge, and yet,

「You don't understand nanodesu? Why am I able to easily block your attack——」

Twirl, Vouivre rotated and parried the Scythe that Gorynych swung—and quickly slashed horizontally.

The blade that should have been dodged by Rosa moving back hit her armored shoulder.

Zagun-!

「Wha-.....!」

Due to the attack of the retractable Blade, dodging by taking distance didn't work well.

No—rather than that, something was strange.

It was like Rosa's movement of 『if it was the situation right now, she would leap back to dodge』 was perfectly predicted—.

「There is no one more cowardly in the bottom of their heart than someone who lie and deceive nanodesu. If it's a situation where you can't move to counterattack, you won't move forward and retreat. That analysis is spot on.」

「.....」

The expression of Rosa that was sporting a confident smile until now changed into a serious look.

La Cruche intentionally took time to focus on defense was to throw several hundreds—no, several thousands 『questions』 to Rosa and determined her disposition using True Eyes.

In other words, rather than saying that La Cruche was reading the thought of Rosa right now, it was more that she had almost grasped all her movement pattern.

The analysis was progressing even while they were glaring at each other in a deadlock like this.

With the data collection and calculation of Automata, the precision of the enemy prediction was increasing remarkably.

Rosa's heart was being dissected open by each second.

「Do you think that it's similar? Compared to how your precious Lux Arcadia read his opponent's moves?」

「Hah」

Rosa unconsciously snickered when she heard La Cruche's words.

There was no way it was like that.

Lux's prediction in the end was the superhuman reading that was based on thousands, tens of thousands of experience.

It wasn't like the cheap analysis of Vouivre's Divine Raiment that read the heart.

「Don't group myself together with him, it looks like you want to say that. In that case, I'll break you into pieces to prove it nanodesu.」

The expressionless face of the Automata looked like it was sporting a faint smile. Rosa who was facing her felt like she saw that.

「Just how brittle and shallow this so called heart that human have. I'll engrave it into your body nanodesu.」

「Taking back you say, laughable desu. I—we Automata were created using the technology of you Key's Supervisors. But my parent is only Arshalia-sama and the master who she recognized desu.」

And then in the location a hundred ml away at the west from where Rosa and La Cruche were fighting, Soffice and the Moon's Gear Leader Re Plica were also battling.

Over there was a battle to protect Airi.

Over here was a battle to protect Alma, but no matter which side was defeated, it would make the situation to lean greatly toward the victory of the New Kingdom camp.

Unlike Rosa, Soffice who had experience of receiving Baptism with her body was noticing the truth little by little.

She realized that they were defeated by Fugil in the battle at the abandoned capital Guernica and their perception was manipulated by Uroboros's world revision.

「I've already noticed the truth. I won't listen to the nonsense of you who is being controlled.」

「It's only your mouth that is skilled desu. However——」

Re Plica moved the land battle type Divine Drag-Ride Gargoyle that possessed light yellow heavy armor and drew near.

Even though it was a full powered dash, there should be enough distance between them, but in an instant—it wasn't a metaphor, without even experiencing the passing of a tenth of second, the enemy was already within Soffice's range when she noticed.

「Again? Just what's this!? —Uah!」

The Halberd thrust forward using its long reach.

That attack with the heavy weight of land battle type behind it pierced Vritra's barrier easily and hit the armor.

Soffice somehow avoided taking damage to her shoulder where the Force Core was installed, but the impact caused dull pain to run through her body.

「All of you are doing unnecessary things desu. Granting the glory to rule the world to the master who is chosen by Avalon—and consequently

by Sacred Eclipse, that is our duty. That is the right act to guide this world desu!」

「.....-! Vajra!」

Re Plica and Gargoyle chased after Soffice who was sent flying. But then Soffice activated her special armament the satellite weapon toward them.

She matched the timing to fire the lightning strike at the location where Re Plica was going to move to, but right after that Gargoyle dodged once more using instant movement.

It was exactly the same like before. Soffice couldn't detect the movement at all.

「——!? How, that」

「Stop the useless resistance desu.」

She wondered if Re Plica was using a Divine Raiment of teleportation just like Celis's Lindwurm, but there was no way that was the case.

It was impossible for Divine Raiment to be the same if it wasn't by the same type or using copying ability.

「Mahaprana!」

In order to take distance from the approaching Gargoyle, Soffice made herself to fall back quickly using the Divine Raiment of trajectory control.

If she took too much distance, Alma would get attacked once more, so she only took distance until where she could barely send her own attack.

「What meaning there is in knowing the truth for you desu? It's meaningless for the like of imperfect creature like you who is doing nothing but committing mistake.」

「.....!？」

Re Plica muttered nihilistically. She also threw several Daggers using Gargoyle's powerful arm.

In respond Soffice took a formal fighting stance with her Blade and resolved herself to deal with the attack.

She did it while feeling slightly shaken by Re Plica's words.

(Certainly, I made mistakes.)

She who was put in cold sleep inside the Moon woke up by herself without any memory of the past.

What she had was the reality and the past history.

The Ruins stimulated humans' desire and became seed of conflict. Tragic fighting kept getting repeated.

Soffice who didn't even know her reason for living chose the path of accomplishing her mission as Gear Leader at the very least. She chose to take away the Ruins from the Lords and the leaders of this era who she couldn't trust to manage the Ruins herself. And so she challenged the world.

However, in the end she was betrayed by Dragon Marauder and failed.

If Lux wasn't there with her at that time, she would die in despair without being able to connect with anyone.

「But—right now is different.」

Soffice cheered up her shaken feeling and concentrated.

She reversed the trajectory of the thrown Daggers using Mahaprana and sent it back to her opponent.

When the opponent faltered, she would fire lightning strike using Vajra, then struck further with her Blade to end the battle.

It should be like that but—.

She certainly planned to do that but,

The Daggers that the opponent threw didn't get reversed by Mahaprana. They already pierced Vritra's armor when she noticed.

「Ouch, AAAAAH.....!?!」

The Daggers that pierced her barrier shallowly grazed her flesh arms and legs. Intense pain ran through her four limbs.

(How!? Why—)

Soffice didn't avert her gaze from the approaching Daggers even for a moment.

And yet, she was already hit by the enemy's attack when she noticed.

It was strange even if Gargoyle's Divine Raiment was physical teleportation.

Because Soffice didn't even perceive the moment when the Daggers vanished from her field of vision.

(I don't understand, how she do it..... The secret of Gargoyle's Divine Raiment—. At this rate, I'll lose.)

「Die without understanding anything desu. That's the suitable way for you who don't even understand yourself desu.」

Re Plica dashed forward fiercely toward Soffice who was losing balance.

While the despairing line of death was approaching, Soffice heard the voice of someone who yelled from afar.

「——」

「——Lu, x?」

The ferocious yell that thundered from far away undoubtedly belonged to that young man.

He too was in a fierce battle against someone near here.

The instant she noticed that fact, a certain memory surfaced at the back of Soffice's mind.

After Soffice woke up from the cold sleep in the Ruin of Moon, she was living together with the Automata Re Plica and her little sister Uruk.

Her little sister was always dreaming within that small world that was isolated from the outside world.

『Hey, Onee-chan. I want to take a look at the world on the surface!』

The reason why they were surviving even while being left behind from the era was surely in order to have understanding with someone.

In the first place even the Key's Supervisors were going through a long journey like that before they encountered the Arcadia clan who would accept them.

Her little sister who harbored such wish met the foul play of humans who were aiming for Ruin's technology and died.

Soffice who lost hope wouldn't come into contact with anybody else anymore. She resolved herself to fight alone in order to protect the Ruins. However—,

『If I let you escape from here, there won't be anymore chance for us to talk.....I don't want you and me to kill each other.』

After she was intercepted and captured by Magialca, she was put inside a prison and conversed with Lux. He was different with anyone she met until now.

Everyone was fighting for their own benefit.

However he was——.

Including his little sister Airi who was taking care of her, the people who gathered around him, all of them acted for his sake. They were fighting for the sake of someone else other than themselves.

『I don't know how to make you believe me but, I'll try doing what I can do. Because that's the only thing that I can do.』

Lux's troubled smile was burned in Soffice's eyes.

The truth was, she wanted to be accepted by the people of this world.

He kept coming back to her who obstinately refused to get involved with other and kept persuading her.

(My first, friend. Lux, and also Re Plica too——)

Just like how they didn't give up, there was no way she could give up.

That was the reason why Soffice was fighting here right now.

「Mahaprana!」

VNN! Vritra's armor shined and unleashed the Divine Raiment of trajectory control.

The control target wasn't herself, but Re Plica and Gargoyle that were skating toward her.

「.....Impertinent act, desu.」

Re Plica who was made to abruptly curve to the side mowed down the approaching trees in front of her with her Halberd.

But, her legs were completely stopped.

Vritra soared up using that chance and recovered its balance.

「Yes, there is something that Lux taught me.」

It was when the members of Seven Dragon Paladins were together in a banquet that was held up in one of the days of the looping parade.

『Lux, how do you get so many friends and lovers? I want you to teach me the trick.』

She remembered getting drunk from drinking alcohol for the first time and bothered Lux like that.

In respond Lux cleared up the misunderstanding that she had no lover, and then she told her this while looking troubled.

『I can't really say anything about that but, if I have to say then perhaps it's not to get fixated to just one way of looking. You know, if you have prejudice of someone as enemy or ally, then you won't be able to see them as anything else other than that.』

『Certainly, you young man aren't just looking at your friend's breast, you're also looking at other places like their legs or sides.』

『I'm telling you that's not what I mean! Stop making it sound like I'm the lowest man nonchalantly like that! Or rather, it's because Soffice's clothes has high exposure rate that I'm always looking at that kind of place——』

She made fun and teased him at the end but, the content of the talk was like that.

(That's right..... Not just one angle. To learn the truth, I can just move the opponent.)

If Gargoyle had the power to stop time or to teleport——then she should be able to dodge using Vritra's Divine Raiment before this.

(Is that, also a fake to trick me? No.....there is no way the opponent will intentionally miss the chance to finish me off.)

Soffice's concluded that the opponent never tried to dodge.

In other word, Gargoyle's Divine Raiment wasn't in the category of time stop or teleportation.

However, it was attacking in the moment when Soffice didn't notice. That meant——.

「——I get it, Lux. It's thanks to you that I notice what I was unable to notice.」

Soffice muttered and tightly clenched her fist.

Soffice's memory that was erased by the world revision.

The sensation of Lux's hand grasping back at her hand was remaining even now.

But, the next moment, time leaped.

「——!？」

DOGU-!

A dull impact suddenly pierced through Soffice's chest from behind.

「U, ah.....!」

Her back wings were struck by buckshot of rocks that approached from behind. Vritra's altitude decreased greatly.

Re Plica launched attack on Soffice from somewhere once more while Soffice didn't notice.

(I don't know, her location. Plica is hiding inside the forest and attacking me.)

Rocks flew at her just now from behind, but she must have moved away right now. At the very least Re Plica wouldn't be right behind her.

The thruster device that was the advantage of flying type was targeted. Her altitude was forcefully lowered.

The enemy's aim was already clear.

After that she planned to approach Vritra from inside the thicket and consigned Soffice to oblivion in one attack.

「It's pointless no matter what you try desu! The righteous us losing is just——」

The Automata voice that was familiar to her ear.

The words of the girl who had been living together with her like her actual little sister came into her hearing from somewhere.

The girl who was put under the control of Raffi who connected to Avalon and had her mind stolen——.

「That too, is a wrong assumption you know, Re Plica」

Someone who was her family in the past was directing a thick killing intent to her.

The power output of Vritra was also decreasing. It was a despairing situation where she couldn't even escape by flying away.

Even so Soffice was unperturbed. She quietly replied back.

「I thought, that Key's Supervisor won't be able to reach an understanding with the people of this era. I also thought that if it's us then we'll be able to make the right judgment. But it was wrong, I was just unable to realize it. It was you and Lux who made me noticed. That's why——」

「Is that so? You can just do whatever you like desu. But, you're unable to defeat me desu——. After all!」

Instantly, an explosive sound of an attack came from a ground just slight distance away.

Right after that, Gargoyle suddenly appeared from the ground a few dozen ml away.

Soffice was paying attention to the surrounding sound and presence, but she opened her eyes wide in astonishment seeing that.

「That form is.....Over Limit!?!」

In order to finish the fight before Vritra flew to the sky once more, Re Plica released all her Drag-Ride's limiters and transformed into its strongest form.

The lightning strike from Vritra's satellite weapon Vajra attacked Gargoyle, but the opponent dodged it.

Re Plica was hiding in thicket before this wasn't just for approaching Soffice stealthily,

「It was to buy time to change into Over Limit——」

「You're noticing it too late desu! You've lost already desu!」

Gargoyle charged forward with a speed that eye couldn't follow.

At the same time, that thick armor shined brightly and activated the unknown Divine Raiment.

Re Plica was convinced.

Soffice absolutely wouldn't be able to dodge the next attack. She also couldn't defend. She also couldn't hide.

Therefore she fixed her aim to simply split Soffice into two with her Halberd without thinking of defense or anything else. In that instant—.

「Eh——!?!」

With a jerk, Gargoyle's center of gravity leaned forward and it stumbled.

The wheels on the armored legs floated in the air and she went through a track that crossed above Vritra and Soffice who were crouching on the ground before crashing on the large rock behind.

「Gua.....! Wha, what happened desu!? Is it a breakdown desu-!? In this kind of time!」

There shouldn't be any chance of her being done in by Soffice, not even in a one of a million chances.

Because,

「Because the opponent shouldn't even be able to think to defend. Is that what you think?」

「Tsu.....!?!」

Re Plica crashed on the large rock with great speed and her armor was smashed due to the impact. She looked up at Soffice.

「Did you change my trajectory with Mahaprana!? But how——」

Soffice made the skating armored leg to float, breaking the opponent's balance while changing the trajectory so that she crashed on the large rock behind.

That in itself was possible if using Vritra, but Soffice should be unable to do that.

Because in order to shift the trajectory of Gargoyle's charge, it was necessary to concentrate solely on that and used the Divine Raiment while the enemy was approaching.

And then, when Gargoyle had approached until that range——.

「My consciousness should be swallowed into darkness. That's why I shouldn't be able to react at all. That's it right?」

「.....Tsu!?!」

Re Plica fell silent hearing what Soffice pointed out.

That was the answer.

The Divine Raiment of land battle type Divine Drag-Ride Gargoyle was to swallow the consciousness of the designate opponent within the range for several moments.

For several seconds, the opponent's consciousness itself would be taken away.

That was why, they wouldn't even notice what was done to them.

It felt like the time was skipped.

「 Bu, but. How desu!? How were you able to act while your consciousness were gone——」

「 Animal ear's memory is bad. Even though it was you who taught me in the past——」

Soffice made a blank stare and took a stance with Vritra's Sword Device.

Instantly, small light frames were floating around the armor.

「 Wha.....! 」

Tuning—the reconstruction of Drag-Ride's system.

Seeing that Re Plica finally understood the secret of the trick that Soffice used.

When controlling Drag-Ride using body control operation or mind control operation, although it was only for very slight there would be time lag.

Normally it was a lag that didn't even take a hundredth of second, but when the Drag-Ride was damaged, there would be case where that lag was increasing.

At the past, in the training using the Moon's combat simulator, Soffice once blundered in using Vajra and hurt herself. She was hit by the electricity's shockwave.

At that time, Re Plica lectured her full of confidence.

『 Good grief, Soffice is completely no good desu. You need to use tuning at that kind of time. 』

If she changed the setting using tuning, she would also be able to delay the reaction when controlling Drag-Ride.

In other words, even when there was a blank in her consciousness, by reading the timing of a moment ahead, she prepared a delayed control that

would work at the instant Gargoyle's Divine Raiment activated—that was the trick.

In order to control the Drag-Ride with time delay for several seconds later that she thought as the right timing.

Of course, if Re Plica was careful and made a feint or braked suddenly, Soffice would be in disadvantage.

But, Soffice won the bet.

「Uu.....but desu! I still haven't lose—!」

Re Plica forcefully controlled Gargoyle that became in tatter and damaged after the heavy crash. She swooped down while swinging up her Halberd to aim at Soffice.

In respond Soffice's usual expressionless face crumbled and she raised a sad face.

「I'm sorry, Re Plica. I cannot take back your heart.」

Soffice who was a Key's Supervisor understood.

The consciousness of the girl who supported her like a sister was overwritten and vanished.

For an Automata, their memory was their life.

Soffice shed tears and mourned that it was taken away.

「But, I thought of the you who was staying together with me as the true you. That's why—thank you, for everything until now. I'll do my best from here on.」

—*Pishaaa!*

In an instant, Re Plica and Gargoyle were vertically pierced by Vajra's lightning.

「A, a.....!」

Right after blocking the last attack, Vritra's Blade stabbed Gargoyle's shoulder and destroyed the Force Core there.

「Haa....., haa.....!」

Soffice dispelled Vritra's armor and plopped down on the snowy ground.

Scattered around her was the wreckage of the friend who she slew as enemy.

「This isn't the time, to cry.」

But, her consciousness was getting fatter due to the cold and fatigue.

When her body tittered and about to fall, there was a presence behind her.

「You will catch a cold if you sleep at that kind of place you know? I'm used to cold of this degree though.」

「.....-!? You're—Ymir Theocracy's?」

「You, remember my name at least.....」

Soffice thought that it was a new enemy for a moment, but the one who appeared was a little girl with wavy silver hair.

The girl who fought together with her in the abandoned capital Guernica as a fellow member of Seven Dragon Paladins, Mel Gizalut.

Until now she along with Greifer was facing the Drag-Knights of the four great nobles, Nier and Dawla who were guarding the Ancient Forest.

「We finished easily at our side so I came to give back up but, looks like you won. But, if I'm not wrong that Automata is—」

「Yes, the child who was like my little sister. After I woke up in the Moon, she stayed beside me all this time but.....」

「.....I see.」

Unlike Soffice, Mel still hadn't been freed from the binding of perception manipulation from Uroboros.

But, she could at least understand that Re Plica appeared as an enemy due to some kind of abnormal situation.

「As I thought, it looks like something important that is related to the Ruins is happening here.」

「Yes..... Can you, listen to me? Perhaps, your memory will return bit by bit.」

「I don't mind. I'm also getting curious, but—before that」

Gently, using the armored arm of Divine Drag-Ride Ddraig Gweiber, Mel hugged Soffice's body.

She warmed that freezing body using the heater installed in her Drag-Ride.

「First, I'll give you first aid. I'll listen to you while you rest.」

「.....I'm surprised. Even though you looked like a cold person, you're unexpectedly kind.」

「 I'm Mel Gizalut. Remember my name properly. Our country and birthplace are different but, there is no doubt that we're comrade. Besides——」

Mel suddenly showed a sad face and whispered.

「 Even at my age, I know the pain that you're feeling right now. The feeling from an important person who supported your heart leaving you is——」

Mel too in the past saw Orphel, her benefactor who was like a mother to her died.

But, because Lux and Krulcifer were there for her, she was able to get back on her feet.

「 Then, is it okay, even if I cry for a bit? 」

「Yes, I'll keep it a secret from everyone. 」

Mel lifted up Soffice's limp body in her arms.

At the side of one thing that she lost, Soffice felt like she obtained a new something.



「Haa, haa.....! Lux.....sama!?!」

At the same time.

Rosa who was fighting nearby also heard Lux's yell that sounded like a roar.

The flying type Divine Drag-Ride Vouivre was cornering Gorynych that was a tough land battle type Divine Drag-Ride.

The special characteristic of the retractable Roster Edge was its ability to switch skillfully between close range battle and medium range battle.

Its strength laid in matching the opponent's tactic and executed the optimum action.

And then, La Cruche used her Divine Raiment True Eyes to analyze Rosa's specialty tactic and attack one by one and crushed them.

「Oh, looks like you're agitated nanodesu. Are you that worried about Lux Arcadia?」

La Cruche was laying out barrage of bullet using Breath Gun wearing Vouivre while cornering Rosa.

To activate Gorynych's Divine Raiment, Tartarus Frame, a strong focus was necessary but, she was unable to do the transformation combination while under attack.

If she was able to enter the Devilmacia Mode she would be able to obtain the maximum power output and greatly shortened the distance to victory, but the enemy wouldn't give her the time for that.

La Cruche pressed on with mechanical precision to accurately tear apart Gorynych's armor and decided the battle.

「.....Kuh!」

La Cruche weaved through the armor's gap and dealt damage on Rosa's flesh body.

Even now she dealt shockwave impact of Breath Gun from the gap of the armor, planting pain and terror into Rosa.

Breaking the opponent's heart—that was the tactic of the current La Cruche.

People tended to think of piloting ability as important factor of a Drag-Knight's strength, and in fact they were right, but they also often

overlooked that strong mind was indispensable to apply that strength.

No matter how much skill they had, if they didn't have the strength of heart that allowed them to display it completely, they wouldn't be able to display their best performance.

And then, La Cruche knew from the record in the Ruins just how brittle a Drag-Knight who lost the sense of balance in their heart.

「It looks like you're strong against pain nanodesu. Apparently you have received training for that. No, perhaps it's more correct to say that you have received violence daily nanodesu.」

「That's an unnecessary concern you knoww.....」

Rosa Granhide's past.

When she was a child, her parents who protested the continuation of unproductive war murdered by the government. She herself was also tortured and lived under oppression.

She was picked up by a military officer when she was dying.

Rosa whose heart was already crushed received an education that was nearly a brainwashing. She played the role of a villain and ruled at the surface as the King of Vices of Heiburg Republic.

In reality, she was being manipulated for the convenience of others. But even knowing that, she didn't know other way of living.

Until that day.

The day where it was raining on the urban area of Heiburg Republic, where she was defeated by Lux in the battle there—.

Overwhelming strength and kindness that smashed apart her mask without killing her and saved her.

Seeing that, Rosa's heart was moved.

If she could live for the sake of this person, then it wouldn't be scary at all.

That her life that fell into dark shadow would be illuminated by him—.

「—Haaah!」

Rosa swung up her large Scythe while unsheathing Gorynych's Sword Device.

Using mind control operation, she controlled the unmanned Twelve Vices simultaneously and launched all out attack.

「.....I see, that's a rough command, but if the unmanned drones are all moved simultaneously, I too will find it hard to predict their movement. It's a countermeasure by including uncertain factor into your tactic isn't it nanodesu?」

「——!?!」

Her aim was read by La Cruche, but Rosa's choice was correct.

Several of the attacks of the drones hit La Cruche's Vouivre.

But, the essential Rosa herself, only the attack from Gorynych's main body that got thoroughly defended and dodged with certainty.

「The objective of diversion is for capitalizing on the real action. In other words, even the simple attack of the drones hit, it won't be lethal nanodesu. Therefore——」

Gakii-.....!

The blade of Roster Edge entered into blade locking contest. From there it stretched out and using that momentum, Gorynych's Scythe was repelled.

「.....Tsu!?!」

Rosa immediately strengthened her barrier to endure, but in that instant, La Cruche and Vouivre approached in front of Rosa.

If it was a normal Drag-Knight, when they were approached by an armed enemy Drag-Knight, they would raise their barrier's output and focused on defense.

In exchange Rosa immediately unleashed Howling Roar for defense and offense rolled into one. And then she was going to switch into counterattack from there but,

「I'm telling you, I've seen through a mere shallow thinking from you nanodesu.」

La Cruche who read that action took a sharp turn and circled behind Rosa.

However, right after she took that defenseless back, she felt a discomfort.

「Is that so? Certainly it's just as you said. —Break Purge!」

「.....Guh」

The armor that was shot out from Rosa's Gorynych attacked La Cruche behind her.

Break Purge took off some parts of the user's own armor while shooting it out as buckshot. Just like Howling Roar, it also used a lot of energy of Force Core so it couldn't be used consecutively.

However, the Howling Roar that La Cruche dodged just now was nearly an ineffectual attack. Its power output was extremely weak and used little energy.

In other words, the first attack was a fake.

「.....So there is, also that move nanodesu.」

Vouivre was unbalanced after receiving the armor buckshot.

Rosa didn't miss that moment. The Scythe of the lightened Gorynych slashed.

——*Zaguu-! Ginn!*

Vouivre's barrier was cut apart and it was sent flying to the side.

La Cruche along with her Drag-Ride crashed on a huge tree some dozens of m away.

「Even I can at least predict what you might do after reading my mind.」

In the common sense of Drag-Knight, firing Howling Roar and Break Purge one after another wasn't just done, it couldn't be done.

After all if one of them was used with weakened strength, there wouldn't be any meaning to it.

Because as long as the opponent didn't read the user's mind, it couldn't even be used as a feint.

「I see..... Looks like you have the ability that is worthy for a representative of a country nanodesu. Certainly——」

「It's still too early for you to praise me. After all it's only from here that you'll get scattered into pieces horribly.」

Rosa used the opening from having taking distance from Vouivre and lifted up her Sword Device high. She thought with focus.

「Tartaros Frame——Devilmacia Mode!」

The drones special armament, Twelve Vices were gathered and transformed Gorynych into a single huge Drag-Ride.

The terrific power output of more than ten Drag-Rides would greatly exhaust Rosa's stamina, but it formed an overwhelming offensive and defensive power in exchange.

「Fall! You cursed Automata!」

And then, a giant armored fist that was as large as a single house struck toward Vouivre.

DO-, GOON.....!

「.....!？」

But, right after Rosa unleashed her attack, she felt something was strange.

At the same time when her fist struck, a great impact also burst from the inside of Gorynych's huge armor. Rosa's consciousness became distant.

「Guh.....! Wha, what in the world is this? Something——」

「Your heart is completely transparent nanodesu. That includes your attempt to somehow take distance from me and combine using Tartarus Frame.」

「This is..... In the armor of Devilmacia Mode, something like gems are——」

「Vouivre's special armament. Jewel BitGem Eyeball . It's an installed type weapon that can fire out beam. When your Gorynych combined, I sneaked this weapon into it. In order to connect it to your inside and attack your frame from there.」

「.....No, way!」

Right after the combine, those weapons were activated in full power and attacked Devilmacia Mode from inside.

The plan that Rosa thought had managed to take the opponent by surprise was seen through.

(What should I do..... My greatest technique is defeated. I can't, think of anymore idea to win against this La Cruche.....!)

The multi-layered armor was crumbling. Vouivre flew and slashed with its Blade to peel the armor.

(Lux-sama, I'm sorry. I.....cannot, help you)

「That's right nanodesu.」

La Cruche whispered as though she had seen through Rosa's heart.

「You cannot save anyone nanodesu. You're nothing but a puppet without will despite possessing a flesh and blood body.....」

「Tsu.....!?!」

Rosa's expression distorted in bitterness when the wound of her heart was gouged.

La Cruche didn't miss that opening and showered blows with Vouivre.

Cannon shot, slash, and then beam attack using Jewel Bit from every directions.

The last remaining thick barrier and armor of Gorynych were also peeled off. The impact that penetrated her body made Rosa showed an expression of anguish.

(Why, am I fighting? Even though there isn't any prospect of victory or anyone asking me to do it)

The reason to fight.

For Rosa whose heart was broken since she was a child, such thing didn't exist.

Her purpose of living was only to get praised and needed by someone else.

She only lived to accomplish the role that someone else created for her.

(Lux, sama.....)

However, when she was defeated by that young man and she was liberated from the curse of the King of VicesCalensia, a light shined on her.

What surfaced to her mind was the memory of the parade the other day.

It was her conversation with Lux that she remembered because it happened at the last repeated parade.

「—Lux-sama, why are you that strong? Not just against other Drag-Knight, but also against Abyss. No, as a human too.....」

At the night of parade, in the castle's banquet venue.

When Lux abruptly headed to the terrace to feel the wind, Rosa resolved herself and asked him what she wanted to ask.

Since the case in Heiburg, Rosa was under the command of Magialca for a long time but, the end of that period was also approaching near.

The ruler that reigned from the shadow in Heiburg had vanished, but from here on she would have to choose her own path by herself.

For Rosa who had lived as someone else's manipulated puppet until now, she had no confidence for that.

It was a godsend that she got this chance to talk with him just the two of them.

While thinking that she wanted to embrace Lux tightly if possible, she talked toward his back.

In respond he made a troubled smile.

「I'm, not strong or anything. I noticed that after spending time together with everyone in that academy.」

「That's not true. At the very least, Lux-sama has never lost no matter what kind of adversity you faced and you keep persisting on your own belief.」

「It'll be great if I can do that. But right now, there is no way that the current me will be able to make things go that well.」

(Aa.....)

That expression that turned back toward her.

Seeing from the side the young man's face that was hiding a strong will within that peaceful expression, the inside of Rosa's head was numbed sweetly.

That power that overwhelmed Rosa.

And then, at the point when he could kill Rosa, he saw through that it wasn't evil at her inside but just a weak girl, and he saved her.

Exactly because of that Rosa's heart was stolen by this young man.

「However, if I can say one thing about what should be done in order to fight—. I think that you mustn't feel scared to look.」

「Feeling scared, to look?」

Rosa repeated the words as a question. Lux nodded.

「To be more accurate, it's to see through the truth about yourself and your opponent. It's something really hard though..... I too, when fighting you, I don't know what I would do if Phi-chan wasn't there with me.」

「.....」

Lux forgot himself in anger because Philuffy got hurt. Heiburg's people then spurred him on and he almost got buried under the impulse to strike down the evil called Rosa.

However, that wasn't Lux's true wish,

「Observe, face each other, fight, and understand what the opponent is thinking. That's really, really difficult to do, but. If you can do that——」

The young man faced Rosa and smiled.

「I think you'll be able to take a step closer to win.」

Those words of him remained forever inside Rosa's chest.

「Die, die already nanodesu. How long are you going to cling on that battered Drag-Ride?」

「.....」

Perhaps it only took several seconds. Her memory with Lux that surfaced at the back of her mind like revolving lantern vanished and the present situation was projected into Rosa's sight.

La Cruche and Vouivre that unleashed attacks like raging stream to strike and push Rosa back.

In contrast Rosa had her sure-kill technique Tartaros Frame and Devilmacia Mode seen through. She was even taken by surprise and now she was in a despairing predicament. A large part of Gorynych and her barrier had also been peeled off.

(—And yet, why isn't the current me defeated yet?)

Even though she was only defending unconsciously using the instinct that permeated through her body in order to survive.

The Divine Raiment of Vouivre that La Cruche was wearing, True Eyes. If she had such ability, than perhaps even her would be able to see the truth of her opponent but——.

(No, that's not it..... That's only peering at the surface of your opponent's heart. It's nothing more than reading the right and wrong of the question you have.)

『However, if I can say one thing about what should be done in order to fight—. I think that you mustn't feel scared to look.』

「Feeling scared, to look?」

Rosa repeated the words as a question. Lux nodded.

『—To be more accurate, it's to see through the truth about yourself and your opponent.』

Lux's words that he told her at the parade's banquet were coming back in Rosa's chest.

Why, La Cruche was unable to defeat Rosa when she should have crushed all her plans?

Why she was able to hold on like this?

Why this enemy was so persistently attacking Rosa's heart until now like this?

And then, even though she should have already analyzed all Rosa's method of attack, why then La Cruche was the one who was at a loss of how to attack—.

「I understand, it. Lux-sama」

—*Gakii-!*

「Wha-.....!?!」

Rosa swung her large Scythe with a round trajectory. She parried Vouivre's Blade while slashing back.

The tip of the blade pierced the barrier and stabbed into the Automata's foot. La Cruche opened her eyes wide in shock.

「Hah, as I thought. So it's something like that」

「What's the meaning of this? Why can't I read the attack—」

La Cruche was bewildered, but Rosa's counterattack didn't stop with just that.

Without pause she drove forward and tackled the opponent, using the advantage of land battle type Divine Drag-Ride's weight.

La Cruche reflexively ascended up to escape to the sky. In that instant Rosa pulled back her Scythe and cut up her back wings.

「U, ah.....!? How-.....!?!」

Normally, it would be difficult for a weapon like a large scythe to hit with a linear attack because of its curving blade, but it was suited for an attack that hooked an enemy that tried to escape or attack toward place like the back or the side.

La Cruche lost the ability to fly and descended. In respond Rosa used the butt of her Scythe to land a blow on La Cruche's torso.

La Cruche was sent flying to the back. When her back hit a large tree, Rosa launched a slashes from every direction.

(How!? Why, nanodesu!?)

La Cruche suppressed her desire to scream. She was bewildered by Rosa's fierce counterattack.

Why was she unable to read Rosa's heart even when she threw question at the deep consciousness of Rosa using True Eyes?

And then, why was Rosa's attacks landing on La Cruche as though she was seeing through her movement?

La Cruche's movement was crushed meant that her action was predicted by Rosa.

In that case, Rosa's mind should be working with complicated thought in order to do that.

And yet, she was unable to read that mind.

La Cruche didn't understand the reason and felt flustered.

「You're now unable to read my mind, riight? Well of coursee. Right now, I'm not thinking of anything——」

She pushed La Cruche on the large tree with her Scythe's butt, while her other hand raised her Cannon.

Zero distance bombing from a glued posture.

That action that would cause herself to get damaged by the backlash was certainly not something rational.

(She isn't thinking anything, move nonsensically, so that her heart cannot be read? Then——!)

She would also counterattack with all her strength without any consideration to her own state in order to make the enemy falter. That was the only way.

If Rosa received large damage and got cornered into predicament, then her fainthearted thought would surely flow into her.

.....DOU-!

「Uh, AAAAAA-.....! Howling Roar!」

The zero distance bombing was fired from the Cannon. Vouivre's whole armor was creaking.

But, La Cruche who got damaged also unleashed Howling Roar from their glued state. She took the best action in order to distance Rosa from herself.

There was already the force from the Cannon's recoil that would make the two of them separated from each other.

If she took advantage of that and added Howling Roar on top of that, then she would be able to take a large distance without fail.

If she did that, it should become possible to read Rosa's heart once more and attacked back in advantage.

Gakii-!

「.....wwha-!?!」

That expectation of La Cruche was easily betrayed.

In that instant when she thought that Rosa was blown backward, the back of Vouivre was deeply cut apart.

Rosa who was hit with two impacts from point blank was grinning fearlessly even while bleeding from her forehead and mouth.

「I'm thankful. You increased my attack's strength. After all I fired my Cannon from point blank for this from the start.」

She pushed her Cannon's muzzle on La Cruche's stomach from point blank and placed her Scythe's blade on Vouivre's back in order to hook it at the moment of impact.

If she was bounced back by the impact and the force of the two of them separating from each other was applied, the power on the blade that was hooking on La Cruche would also get increased.

If the impact from the Howling Roar's recoil was also heavy—then it would be even more effective.

Even while Rosa's state was worsening, she focused her remaining energy into her Scythe's blade and swung fully.

「—N, ooOOOOO-!」

There was creaking sound *baki baki* of metal and Vouivre's armor was severed into two.

Even then, La Cruche wrung out her remaining strength and extended her Blade toward Rosa's stomach. She lunged with all her power.

Zashuu-!

But, it didn't hit.

The counterattack of Vouivre that was split into two at the torso by the Scythe's blade was shifted up at the tip due to that impact. It only grazed Rosa's side slightly.

(Why, is this. Even though human should feel pain and fatigue, far more than us Automata—)

The intense pain and exhaustion from the impact's recoil. Rosa didn't even pay those any mind and took another stance with the Scythe she had just swung.

And then, before the energy to pilot Gorynych ran out, the tip of the Scythe struck La Cruche.

「Gu, ah.....」

Vouivre's Force Core was completely pulverized. In addition the Automata's power source was also severed.

The two's battle was decided with that one attack.

「Haa, haa..... Haah, haa.....!」

Inside the Ancient Forest where the ground was slowly getting covered by snow.

Rough white breath leaked out from Rosa's mouth intermittently.

「Why....., how, nanodesu.....? I want, to know nanodesu.....」

La Cruche's wreckage that was scattered into pieces spoke toward Rosa.

「Even at this point, you're still.....talking to me to keep me here even just for a bit longer for your master's sake? That's really an admirable determination.....」

However, Rosa kept her vigilance toward the Automata's tenacity and didn't get closer.

She took distance and readied herself to be able to counterattack anytime.

「You cannot, move your body for a while anyway nanodesu. It should be fine even if you keep the current me company, before I vanish.」

「.....」

It was spot on.

Rosa's exhaustion was already at the point where she couldn't wear Gorynych anymore.

Due to the extreme fatigue, she wouldn't be able to take even a step for a while.

And so she judged that it would be fine even if she answered the Automata's question.

「How, were you able to turn the table in that situation nanodesu? Why did True Eyes become unable to read your action?」

「Even though I still haven't said that I'll answer, you're just asking as you please.」

Rosa said in exasperation. Even so her mouth was also sporting a faint smile.

「Then let me ask you instead, leading someone's heart astray, that was your tactic using Vouivre and True Eyes right?」

「.....」

This time it was La Cruche lying on the ground who fell quiet from getting seen through.

「The answer is—yes nanodesu. The tactic of me and Vouivre is to make the opponent harbor doubt. Someone who hesitates in the middle of battle will become weak, and then they will weaken and end up taking timid action. I read the opponent's tactic one by one for that sake nanodesu. And yet—」

In fact it was effective.

Rosa's every single choice got outsmarted, her trump card was crushed, and she became unable to know what to do.

「I really got panicked there. I panicked and couldn't even show my real strength. I went with a desperate gamble, and when it ended in failure, I despaired thinking that it's the eend. But—I noticed. With my action getting predicted, I could only feel scared at how other is looking at me. Because of that I didn't look at you.」

「.....? What do you, mean by that nanodesu?」

「It means exactly thaat. I thought about you. Why did you try to see through my heart so persistently like that. That was to hide that you don't want to get defeated by the enemy wasn't iit..... I found out in the end though.」

「.....」

La Cruche herself never told anyone but, her Divine Raiment, True Eyes' weak point was 『empty thought』 .

In case someone moved unconsciously to defeat the enemy before their eyes, they would naturally choose the best choice from among the attack patterns that had been engraved in their body and executed it.

Worrying, losing confidence, not being able to think anything, that was the opposite of empty thought.

A powerful Drag-Knight who wouldn't form any plan and surpassed La Cruche when challenging her into a head-on fight was an opponent that La Cruche was most on guard against.

「That was why you fought in the way that made me want to think of what to do whether in offense or defense. If there is time to think, if you force me plan and scheme using words, then I will inevitably focus on it. I too tried to form a plan to take you by surprise or use True Eyes to work against youu. But I didn't notice that was exactly your aim.....」

「I see, nanodesu.....」

It wasn't like Vouivre that La Cruche wore had astoundingly high specs compared to the other flying type Divine Drag-Rides.

That was because an immense energy would be consumed in order to use the Divine Raiment True Eyes.

It would be disadvantageous to normally fight against Rosa and Gorynych that was a land battle type Drag-Ride with outstanding power and toughness.

That was why she tried to weaken her.

She cornered her to become paranoid so that she wouldn't be able to display her actual strength.

「And then, you didn't use that Over Limit thing because you wanted to preserve your strength as much as possible right? In other words, the other Automata that fought Soffice was also defeated. Or perhaps your side was also in predicament. I noticed that.」

「.....Is that, what you mean, by looking at me?」

Rosa observed La Cruche and Vouivre, as well as taking in the present situation as well as the surrounding situation into her consideration.

And then she searched for her opponent's weakness, and crushed her with attacks that were free from any obstructive thoughts without even caring about her own life.

Spouting lies and outwitting the opponent were Rosa's fighting style, but her pure fighting strength as Drag-Knight was also in the top of her country.

「Then, one last question..... Why are you strong nanodesu? After I attacked your heart that much, how can stand and face it nanodesu? How can you make a comeback from that unfavorable situation?」

「.....」

「How....., can you have a strong heart nanodesu? At that time a thousand years ago, if humans didn't betray master, surely..... The world will be in peace.....」

La Cruche was connected to Avalon and memory streamed into her through it. She recalled the tragedy that happened to her creator Arshalia and raised a sorrowful voice.

The people who was saved by Arshalia who was extolled as the Goddess of Salvation.

She remembered the event of the clan of traitor baring their fang at her, killed her, and a part of the world salvation system called Sacred Eclipse was rewritten to be convenient for them.

「Human, is a weak creature. In order to protect their own benefit, in order to have an easy life, they will betray other without batting an eyelid. They're cowardly and unfair. Then how can, such human——」

「.....」

The heartrending yell that was let out by the wreckage of Automata that laid in pieces.

Hearing that, Rosa didn't understand about their circumstance in the past but——.

「It's just like you saay. Human is weak and cowardly. They're that kind of creaturee.」

Rosa let out gasping breath while affirming La Cruche's words.

Rosa who was made to be the body double of the shadow ruler of Heiburg—the King of Vices, Rosa who received the hatred of the people that was focused to her alone knew about the weakness of human's heart more than anyone.

「Lux-sama and the people around him are surely really rare. No, even him and the girls around him also have weak heart. But, they're fightiing..... With that their weak self, they're fighting even now.」

「.....」

「People without such mettle to fight, people who has lost something will be able to torment other without batting an eyelid. If I'm able to change, it's only because of one thing.」

Because she idolized that noble figure that faced their weakness, opposed it, and fought.

At that time when Rosa was defeated in Heiburg Republic.

Lux didn't run away from the weakness of his heart. He conquered his suffering and hatred and saved Rosa.

「Because I was saved by a person who has a strong heart.....」

「Are you talking, about that Lux Arcadia? Are you saying, that's what a hero is——」

Rosa wordlessly replied with a nod.

「.....Is that so. Then, the answer might appear. That Black Hero, and the hero who Arshalia-sama bI'elieved in. Which one is the real deal——. I

want you, to ascertain it with your own, eyes.....」

La Cruche only said that before her function finally stopped.

Rosa watched that while slowly standing up and smiled.

「I'll do just that even without you telling mee. In order to protect Lux-sama who I love and believe in.」

For the sake of the young man who replaced the King of Vices that sunk her tiny self into the shadow and illuminated her heart with light, Rosa grasped her Sword Device once more.

「Haa, haa..... It seems, it'll take a bit more time for me to recover..... If I don't, meet up with Soffice or Lux-sama's little sister at least —」

Her footsteps were unsteady due to the extreme fatigue.

Even so Rosa faced forward and walked ahead. Then her ear heard a thunderous sound.

「——!? That's!」

She gasped and looked up to the snowing sky. There a certain sight entered her eyes.

There a crimson Divine Drag-Ride was dancing in a fierce battle against a jet black Drag-Ride.

Chapter 2

The Fated, Rematch

Ancient Forest, northeast.

At the surface of Avalon's information management facility Archive that was located underground.

Lux who was clad in Divine Drag-Ride Bahamut and Lisha who was clad in Tiamat were confronting each other with the grey colored sky as the background.

—Wrong.

There was no way this was true. Lisha's logic was telling her that.

There was no way Lux would betray the New Kingdom.

There was no way he would point his blade toward her and Queen Raffi.

Him giving instruction to Azure Division and—Alma, it must be some kind of mistake.

Or perhaps, this man was an impostor.

If Lisha didn't think that, she would be unable to move.

But, right now she was the princess of New Kingdom.

That was why, she had to defeat this person no matter who he was.

In order to protect her mother Raffi who had staked her life to protect this country until now.

(.....This wasn't in the plan. But—)

The young man facing her, Lux was also similarly losing his bearing.

In his original plan, he planned for Lisha who became a prisoner to not fight till the end.

Either way, due to Uroboros's world revision, Lisha wouldn't be able to recognize Raffi as her enemy.

It would also be hard for the kingdom's people to be able to realize the truth at the end.

In that case, he should finish this without anyone noticing.

He tried to remove the threat of Sacred Eclipse secretly, without telling Lisha or anyone else of the New Kingdom, so that no chaos would result.

However, Lux's fleeting wish easily vanished. Now he was facing Lisha like this.

「There is no way this is true! You're—an impostor! Try answering me! Lux!」

Lisha floated in the air wearing Tiamat. She unsheathed her Sword Device.

With mind control operation she fired the special armament, the twelve throwing weapons Legion.

From where Lux was at, first two of them flew at him with a fierce speed with roaring sound.

「Tsu.....!?!」

Lux used Bahamut's great sword and deflected the Legion's first attack.

But, the concealed shot that was lurking unseen at the Legion's shadow attacked him further.

(She pretended to fire two when it's actually three! Furthermore it was inserted between the first and second Legion!)

Naturally, firing projectile weapon through a trajectory that couldn't be seen from the opponent's perspective needed an uncommon technique.

While a precise control of trajectory was needed, predicting the opponent's field of vision accurately was also indispensable to achieve this miraculous feat.

The sword that swept aside the first attack didn't make it in time. The second Legion hit Bahamut's armor.

「Guh!」

The power was also transmitted to Lux's own body through the barrier. He displayed an anguished expression.

Even so he barely kept only his balance from crumbling.

He swept aside the third Legion, and at the same time he sent it back accurately toward Lisha.

「What.....!?!」

Normally it was next to impossible to accurately hit back a weapon with pointy shape toward the opponent with one's own weapon.

「Chih!」

Lisha's Tiamat boasted variegated as well as overwhelming attack power in regard to long distance attack.

Therefore, it was important to stop Lisha's attack even if he had to brave some danger.

However Lisha didn't stop her attack. She sent out one of the Legion that was positioned around her. She defended by firing down the Legion that Lux reflected back at her.

Right after that, the shot of the Cannon that Tiamat had prepared without Lux noticing attacked toward him in a straight line.

「——Ku!」

Should he block or dodge?

Because the Legion's attack just now hit his torso, Lux immediately chose to dodge.

But, the instant he tried to doge to the side, three Legion came with a curving trajectory toward his side from the opposite direction.

「This is——from that time!?!」

Firing her Cannon and then sending Legion above the firing line to push back the opponent.

It was the tactic that was used at Lux and Lisha's first mock battle.

「——Linker Pulse!」

Lux dodged the cannon shot to the side while forming force field using his special armament to barely skirted the trajectory of the three Legion.

But, he was unable to dodge completely.

His barrier was grazed, the surface of his armor was slightly scratched, and the balance of his armor frame was broken.

「Is that all you can do, cursed imposter」

Jakin Lisha swung her Sword Device further. She summoned the huge cannon—Seven Heads.

Particles of light gathered on the seven cannon muzzles and it fired explosively.

(.....The energy charging is fast! I won't make it in time!)

After using weapon and special armament in quick succession, Lisha attacked further with her main cannon.

Even if Lux defended, the power of the attack would end him if it hit directly.

DOUNN!

「—U, aaAAAH!」

The instant Lux understood that he wouldn't be able to completely dodge it, he hardened his defense by strengthening his barrier and also activating Reload on Fire.

He endured the after wave of the terrific destructive energy of Sevens Head while quickly focusing on rallying himself.

Conversely speaking, there was no worry to be hit with additional powerful attack if it was right after Lisha unleashed her greatest attack.

In that case he activated Reload on Fire the instant he was hit by the attack and a distance was opened. Five seconds later he would switch into counterattack with the state that was accelerated by several times but—.

「As I thought, it's different. You're another person. There's no way you're Lux..... You're weak.」

「.....!?!」

The moment Lisha saw Lux activated Reload on Fire, she retreated and took some distance.

In addition she descended inside the forest and hid herself.

Lux's plan was completely seen through.

Even so, he couldn't let go of this chance.

For Lux whose armor and stamina had been greatly exhausted, if he didn't make this battle a brief one, he would quickly become disadvantaged.

(Strong..... I've realized it already but, Lisha-sama, she has become strong.)

Since that day when he first came to the Royal Officer Academy and fought her, he had fought several mock battles against Lisha.

He should be in advantage from knowing Lisha's capability, but right now he felt that she was the toughest opponent more than anyone else.

Of course there was also the effect from his exhaustion due to the consecutive battle against Celis and Philuffy.

However even more than that, Lisha right now possessed the strength of a firm will.

In order to protect her stepmother Queen Raffi.

In order to protect the New Kingdom, she resolved herself and fought to defeat the enemy.

(I can only finish this right away.....! With the power of Baptism that I obtained—)

The same like the procedure that was applied to Aeril, Yoruka, and the main members of Syvalles, Lux also obtained an ability from the device called the Coffin.

He calmed his breathing and focused his mind in order to activate that power.

(What, the heat won't come out inside my body. The power of Baptism, isn't activating.)

But, for some reason he was unable to use that power.

The power wouldn't well up.

(There is no time to think about it. The strengthening compression of time using Reload on Fire—I can only decide the battle using the remaining five seconds of super acceleration!)

Lux switched his feeling and resolved himself.

He flew with several times his normal speed due to the acceleration of time and charged into the forest below where Lisha vanished into.

He moved until there was less than one second until contact.

He found Lisha's figure that was hidden by the tree leaves.

But, the form of Tiamat that he discovered was completely different than before.

「.....!?!」

「I've been waiting, for you to come challenging me in close quarter combat!」

The two layered armor using Over Unit.

The fighting method that Lisha developed herself. Placing a Drag-Ride that had been turned into parts over another Drag-Ride.

Wyrms Claw that was equipped with additional drill arm and two armored claw arms was aimed to greatly increase the user's capability in close quarter combat.

(She hid inside the forest in order to defend and intercept as well as to change form, and also so I won't realize that aim of hers!)

Lisha looked impulsive in a glance, but she was clever not just in tactic but also in strategy.

As though to prove that, she took preparation to outwit and intercept Lux.

「Even so, I cannot lose here!」

There was no doubt that the present where Bahamut was accelerated by several times was his biggest chance to win.

Thus Lux drew closer and dodged the drill arm. He tried to aim at Tiamat's Force Core.

Right after that, he noticed instantly that it was impossible and gritted his teeth.

「So you came aiming for my Force Core right away?」

Lux hallucinated Lisha saying that to him from her gaze.

It was hidden.

The Over Unit Wyrms Claw was equipped above the armored shoulder that contained Tiamat's Force Core, because of that he couldn't hit it directly.

(Is there no other choice but to destroy the Wyrms Claw first!?)

First he had to strike the Force Claw that was the power source of Wyrms Claw. After the Over Unit was dispelled, he could aim at the Force Claw of

Tiamat.

Although he made that judgment in an instant, Lux noticed that doing that was also difficult.

The reason was the structure of this strengthened armor that Lisha created by remodeling general purpose Drag-Ride was different from normal Drag-Ride.

Therefore, Lux was unable to predict what kind of structure the contained parts and frame had.

(I made a big mistake. How can I only notice such thing after this late.)

The talent of developing Drag-Ride that Lisha nurtured.

He realized its troublesomeness once more now that she turned into enemy.

Most likely, Lisha who was under the effect of the world revision could only recognize Lux as an impostor.

(Then, I'll forcefully make her unable to fight and capture her once more. I'll end this fight without making Lisha-sama get burdened with the anguish and sin of defeating her majesty Raffi!)

If he couldn't aim at the Force Core, he would destroy Tiamat's armor directly.

Lux decided his aim and drove his great sword into consecutive attacks but, it was tough.

(Chaos Brand's blade won't go through! It's the defense barrier that Wyrms Claw generated!)

Tiamat's barrier and was double layered by the barrier that was generated by Wyrms Claw above it.

His attack wouldn't work like he wanted due to the obstruction of that defense that was specialized for close range combat.

Even so, he swung his sword in full force in order to make use the seconds where he was accelerated by several times.

—But, when he destroyed one of the additional arms, his accelerated time was cut off.

「Eat this-!」

The remaining Wyrms Claw.

The arm that was equipped with rare armament in the shape of drill rotated in high speed and stabbed forward.

Lux twisted his body to slip through that and strike the Over Unit with his great sword.

「.....-! A!」

The after wave from the barrier of Wyrn Claw getting pierced made Lisha raised a faint pained voice, even so she drew out her Sword Device in a tight grip.

When Lux wondered what she was going to do with that, Lisha's attack was already unleashed.

「—Break Purge!」

「Wha-.....!」

She released the Over Unit, Wyrn Claw as buckshot that stopped Lux and Bahamut from attacking further.

While Lux was standing still due to that momentum and impact, Lisha and Tiamat leaped backward to take distance.

(This is bad.....this is—)

Most likely Lisha was intending to switch into her remaining two Over Unit.

Wyvern Wing that strengthened the back wing and displayed high mobility, and Drake Horn that provided camouflage, jamming, investigation, and increased surprise attack capability.

It would be really troublesome if she used those two.

Therefore, Lux shifted the armor buckshot using Linker Pulse while forcefully chasing after the withdrawing Lisha.

He would decided the battle before she could summon and wear new Over Unit.

The moment he charged with that determination, Lux's trajectory was changed to an unexpected direction. He floated up.

「—!?!」

「Suppressor—, the gravity weighing you is zero now.」

The Divine Raiment of gravity manipulation that Tiamat possessed.

Because it was a powerful ability that one must be the most vigilant against, Lux always kept it in the corner of his mind.

There would be no damage from strong pressure from having his weight lightened like this, but it was a really troublesome phenomenon in the aspect of disrupting his action.

Even against a flying type Divine Drag-Ride like Bahamut, its mobility would be drastically disordered just by lightening the gravity slightly.

Executing the movement that he planned would become abnormally difficult with this.

No matter how much of an expert Lux was in piloting Drag-Ride, he wouldn't be able to deal with it because he never experienced such situation.

DON-!

「Ua.....!」

His flight trajectory to pursue the retreating Lisha was shifted and he crashed on a tall and big tree.

He immediately tried changing direction to deal with the weightlessness, but at that time Lisha already finished switching her Over Unit.

「Drake Horn! Eat this again! —Suppressor!」

Gakun! Bahamut's altitude decreased and it was instantly pressed on the ground.

This time the burden of heavy gravity was pressed on him and his movement was completely sealed.

「Gu.....! UaAAAH.....!」

Because the Divine Raiment was strengthened by Drake Horn, an unprecedented heavy gravity attacked Lux and Bahamut.

That force that was incomparable to the time when he first fought Lisha didn't allow him to endure.

Not just Bahamut's armor, his flesh body was also screaming.

(How? She applied Suppressor.....she used Divine Raiment while switching Over Unit? Such thing is—)

Using special armament or Divine Raiment that put a great burden on the user at the same time required terrifying amount of stamina and mental

strength.

Especially Lisha who had the tendency to favor the use of ability or weapon with high firepower despite her relatively few stamina, that was her only distinctive weak point.

However her strength right now, it was in the level of Yoruka or Celis, or perhaps Philuffy when she released her power of Abyss—no, it was even more than that.

Looking carefully, something like steam was faintly rising up from Lisha's body.

Lux who didn't know the circumstance had no way to know but, the power of Baptism that was applied to Lisha's body was the accumulation and burning of energy.

She 『accumulated』 beforehand—that was to say that in order for her to exert power, she accumulated energy from her daily life bit by bit, and when she turned on her mental switch when push came to shove, she could 『burn』 that accumulated energy and unleashed it all at once.

That was to say, it was a Baptism that complemented Lisha's weak point until now so that she could use Divine Raiment, special armament, and Over Unit fully.

It took time like this until she could use that power to transform her physical ability that she didn't have before, but the power when it was activated was terrific.

(It's impossible..... At this rate, I won't be able to endure.....! I'll, die.....!)

He sent Lisha a pleading gaze, but he couldn't see any hesitation in her resolve.

He was at a lost whether he should call out to Lisha in the attempt to make her notice that he was Lux and dispelled the binding of world revision.

But—.

(No, I can't do that. If she learn what I'm trying to do, Lisha-sama will be hurt and sad. Right now I'm the leader of Azure Division who is trying to destroy the New Kingdom in the end—)

Lux resolved himself like tha and exerted his last strength.

Lux too also tried to liberate the power of Baptism residing in his body but—.

「Ugu, ah.....!」

His focus was shaken and cut off before he could activate it.

(Why? Is it because I'm tired? Or else—)

Was it because he was being harmed by the damage from Suppressor's pressure.

Lux was visited by a bad condition from unknown cause, even so he kept resisting.

He barely scrapped together his Drag-Ride's energy. Then before his frame was completely breaking apart, he activated Bahamut's Divine Raiment.

「—Reload on Fire!」

The first five seconds of compression strengthening.

The target of the phenomenon of extreme deceleration was the gravity pressure on Lux.

He extremely reduced the gravity pressing down on him and closed in to Lisha using that opening.

「—Howling Roar!」

Even that move was predicted. Lisha unleashed the Howling Roar that had been strengthened several times over by Drake Horn.

However Lux was also the same.

If it was Lisha in her current full power state that used all her special armament and Divine Raiment to the maximum degree, there was no way that she wouldn't at least take such countermeasure—.

「—HAaAAAH!」

Faster than the flood of whirling shockwave could blow Lux away, Chaos Brand's tip stabbed at Drake Horn.

It barely hit and half-destroyed it, but Lux was showered by a terrific shockwave of Howling Roar from below and he was blown away to the air.

「Uh, gu..... Ah.....!」

Bahamut's endurance limit was crossed and his armor was crumbling to pieces.

He should have decided the battle using all his strength before his remaining stamina ran out, but he didn't understand how he was beaten up to this degree.

Of course he had the self-awareness that he had done extremely reckless things all that time he was facing powerful opponents, but,

(Is this, the way I fight until now? Something, is strange.....)

Even though he should have given his best effort, it was like he was just going round in circles.

Lux was imprisoned in such strange mood.

The eyes of Lux who was thrown up saw the grey sky that was snowing.

He was already mostly running out of strength.

The world revision by that Uroboros.

Since he noticed the strangeness of the looping parade until reaching this point, his mind was stretched tightly all this time. It felt like the tension would burst anytime.

(Not, yet..... I——)

He had to save the New Kingdom, this country.

The face of everyone in the Academy, the face of the members of Syvalles.

Krulcifer, Philuffy, Celis, Yoruka, Airi, the Triad.

At the end Lisha's face floated in Lux's mind.

「Lisha-sama, I..... I'm —」

He muttered hollowly while instinctually fixing the posture of his Drag-Ride. In that instant.

——*GAUNN-!(

A sharp impact pierced through his whole body. Lux vomited blood.

「Gah——!」

When he noticed, a shadow that flew up from the forest far below——Lisha who was clad in Tiamat slashed him with her Blade.

The Over Unit that strengthened mobility, Wyvern Wing.

Due to that terrific acceleration, she closed in until short distance in one go and struck a direct hit without him being able to even react.

(Aa——.I can't, go on anymore)

Strength left his whole body. His consciousness was getting far away.

Bahamut's armor was dispelled. Lux was starting to free fall from the sky wearing only a pilot suit.

(So in the end, I couldn't do it)

Just like what Fugil said, he didn't have any caliber as king.

He pursued his ideal too much, but in the end he couldn't save anyone.

That was all there was to it.

(However——, Lisha-sama)

He felt apologetic that he would disappear like this, at the same time he thought that if it her then he could leave New Kingdom to her.

Even if Queen Raffi carried out the world revision again after this, Lisha would receive the affection of the queen and she might be able to live without realizing the truth forever.

She might make the righteous government that Lux wished for came true.

(Then, perhaps it's fine..... Sayonara, Lisha-sama.)

That instant when he was going to gave up everything and let go of his consciousness.

「.....」

「Where is the real you? Where are you, Lux——」

The face of the princess who was turning back and looking down on him falling down looked really sad.

「——」



Right after that, Lux's consciousness was cut off.

Without even noticing the black shadow of terrible omen that was occurring in a part of the Ancient Forest.

—And then.

「Lux-kun!」

Without also noticing the voice of the blue haired girl who saved him just before he crashed on the ground.

「Fugil..... It seems that Raffi Atismata started to change. As expected, she cannot keep hold of her consciousness when she fused with Sacred Eclipse with her human body.」

Near the center of the Ancient Forest.

Near the lake that was the boundary line when they first faced the Azure Division, Fugil and the Automata who managed Avalon, Arshalia were looking up to the snowing sky.

Raffi's change.

Raffi was preserving her thought as human relatively well after she fused with Sacred Eclipse, but anomaly was gradually coming to her mind.

「If she has advanced until that state, then it will start moving soon..... perhaps. It will be a repeat of the phenomenon that occurred several hundred years ago in this Ancient Forest.」

Sacred Eclipse was a system that projected human's will and brought salvation using Elixir.

And then, it was also a regulation system that would react to human's desire, hatred, or hostility, carried out massacre, and absorbed energy.

The latter half of the function wasn't something that was installed by Arshalia who wished for the world's salvation. The traitor at that time killed Arshalia and then added it on their own convenience.

That was the conjecture formed from the situation.

Raffi lost against her own impulse and ate the humans who opposed her. She absorbed those people's fear, hatred, and resentment.

「Guah! Oua.....! UOOOOOO, goh!」

Crunch crunch, snap snap

It was a sound that was unthinkable to come from human. No, even Abyss wouldn't produce such grotesque sound. Such sound resounded from behind a tree right nearby.

Raffi loved Lisha who looked up to her. She was her heart's support.

However, even that memory would soon vanish.

The greatest and strongest humanoid Ragnarok devoured the countless thought of those who opposed her and transformed into a monster that would lead the world to destruction.

She wished for even more destruction and massacre.

With the thought of people getting absorbed and integrated in, the will of salvation was gradually being overwritten. At that time when it reached the last stop, Sacred Eclipse would end the world.

It would eliminate the whole surrounding without any trace.

All living things gathering in this Ancient Forest would return to nothingness and it would make the world to redo back from zero.

And then Fugil would use world revision through Uroboros and made them forgot their memory regarding the Ruins.

The world that lost its fighting strength with the top ranked Drag-Knights mostly annihilated would obtain equilibrium once more.

Fugil's mission was nothing more than an extreme repeat of destruction and resurrection.

He would assure that the system called Sacred Eclipse created by Arshalia to save the world would continue.

He existed just for that.

「Another failure huh. No—it's not. Arshalia, we still don't know. As long as your dream is still alive—」

The ideal of peace that was broken and taken away by someone else.

But, if malice was also the will of human, then Fugil decided to see it through till the end.

Without giving up, he was pursuing the possibility of people choosing the correct path and Sacred Eclipse functioning correctly.

Fugil was waiting for a hero that he was unable to become to appear in the world.

「If I give up, then everything will be over there. In that case, let's make them forget everything and repeat it again. For eternity.」

「.....」

「Gugoh! Gogoo.....! Ogogogogoooooooo, guoh!」

Raffi and Sacred Eclipse were changing into something unknown. Fugil didn't even pay them any mind and looked up to the sky while talking to himself.

The Automata that was the substitute of the girl he loved was standing still without saying anything.

Chapter 3

World of Dream

—Cold.

Inside the consciousness that was covered by jet black darkness.

Lux was feeling nothing but that sensation that was enveloping his whole body.

When was the feeling the coldest through his life until now?

It was when his horse carriage got into an avalanche incident and he got heavily wounded, where he then asked for help but—the people who harbored resentment due to the Old Empire's tyrannical government abandoned them and he lost his mother.

The gradually disappearing warmth under the cold rain.

With despair Lux was made to realize that his mother wouldn't embrace him and his little sister anymore.

Lisha who was abandoned by her father even though he had the great cause that was the revolution must felt the same.

(.....But, when human die everyone is alone. I'm also the same.)

Just like Count Atismata too—a lot of people had dream, held up a great cause, however they were defeated in the middle of their path and met their end.

(Sorry. Alma, Aeril..... I'm sorry, Captain Magialca. I—cannot answer your expectation and pay you back for your help.)

He got trapped by Queen Raffi's plan and unable to surmount the battle against Lisha.

He was unable to even use the trump card that he obtained from going through Baptism.

「So you're only at this level in the end, my decision to take you as my subordinate was a mistake. I'm disappointed.」

A small statured man wearing hooded dark blue coat.

However the fearless grin he sported and his dangerous aura were familiar.

The vice captain of Seven Dragon Paladins, Singlen Shelbrit.

He possessed overwhelming talent and strength. He was someone who wished for a world that was ruled by strong person who he believed in.

He judged all the talentless mass and the corrupt nobles as evil. He wished for a nation that cut away such people.

His principle directly ran counter with Lux, but the influence he received from him was immeasurable.

Lux couldn't say anything back to the sarcasm that was spoken out by his phantom.

(Good grief, there should be a limit at how persistent someone can be.)

Lux smiled bitterly inside the dream.

Even though he fought until his life ran out, he still appeared in front of him as a ghost like this several times. How many times he would do this until he was satisfied?

But, somewhere inside his heart, Lux recognized that this was something his mind was creating.

「It's because you're weak you say? Don't spout excuse.」

Singlen's phantom showed a wicked smile that looked down on him. He talked to Lux who closed his eyes.

「You cannot even be aware of your own weakness. You only avert your eyes from your own kingship. Saying that you can't win when you don't even fight—as expected from the Weakest Undefeated.」

Such thing—isn't true.

I gave my all for the sake of my objective.

No.....

His consciousness was sinking.

But, his body was strangely warm.

Was his death approaching? Or perhaps, when he was still living as chore prince he heard the story from someone who came from a snowy country that people would not get hot instead when it was extremely cold, was this something like that?

—No, this wasn't just warmth, it was also soft.

It was pleasant.

His eyelids that he thought would never open again lifted up slightly. Lux's world that was locked inside darkness was born once more.

(.....Eh?)

It was white in front of his eyes.

No, he faintly saw that it was the color of skin.

At the same time a scent, a soft sweet smell made the inside of his head dazed.

When his hand reached out unconsciously, he felt a smooth sensation of skin.

「Is this, also a dream.....?」

Lux then gasped in surprise and realized the true identity of the thing his face was buried into.

「Aa..... Lux-sama's breath is blowing on my skin, but, please do as you like. I won't mind even if it hurt. No, rather a little bit of pain will be——」

「——wait, Rosa!?!」

A sweet voice of a girl that sounded ecstatic tickled his ear. He realized the situation he was in right now.

Inside the lifeless room that was filled with strange mechanical objects, Lux's face was buried into a girl's chest on top of a bed.

Or rather, they were hugging each other.

Furthermore with skin that had not even a single piece of cloth separating them.

「.....」

He was in a mortal combat just now. But then suddenly he was in this mysterious situation. Lux's mind stopped working.

「Aa, Lux-sama! Have you wake up? I'm glad!」

When Rosa saw Lux's face, she showed an expression of joy with blushing face.

And then, she put strength into her arms once more and hugged him tightly.

He was buried into Rosa's voluptuous and soft breasts. It felt like he was going to suffocate.

He didn't understand the situation, but it seemed he had been saved without a doubt.

「This place is—? Could it be this is the underground of the Ancient Forest, Avalon's—」

「Yes. From what Aeryl told me, it seems to be a facility called the Shelter.」

「Or rather, why are we hugging each other naked!?!」

Lux was recovering his awareness bit by bit and asked in panic.

「Yes. Lux-sama's pilot suit was tattered, so in order to treat your wound later, although it's rude I took the liberty to take it off..... But Lux-sama, you're wonderful even naked.」

「You don't need to comment about my nakedness! That's not what I'm asking!」

He tried to get away from Rosa's breast somehow but, his strength wouldn't come back and so it didn't go well.

It wasn't because of the hard to resist temptation by any means, it was purely because of his declining stamina.

—That should be the case.

「Yes. Your body was cold, so I thought to warm Lux-sama—」

「Is that so..... Not that, I'm already alright! If we are seen doing something like this, then a misunderstanding—」

She said that Aeryl was the one who took them here for treatment. That meant at the very least there should be several girls who were Lux's comrades nearby. So this was dangerous.

「It's fine. More importantly, please rest more for now. With my body——」

Rosa said that with an intoxicated faint smile while bringing her lips closer.

「Wait, Rosa」

Her naked breasts were pressed on Lux's chest. His head was dazed by the softness.

Then, at that time.

From outside the room *Kiin!*, the sound of Ruin's space teleportation device activating could be heard.

「Wai-! This is bad Rosa! Move away quickly and wear your clothes-!」

「Ahn. Geez Lux-sama, I'm happy.」

He intended to grab her shoulders and pushed her away but, his fingers sunk completely into the right and left bulges on her chest.

In that moment, the door of this room opened and he could hear the footsteps of girls from the adjacent room.

「Nii-san! We've brought Celis-senpai and Philuffy-san to here too. Is your body alright—looks like there is no need to ask isn't it.....」

「Yes. It was a waste of effort to feel worried.」



Of all things, it was his little sister who was the person he didn't want to see this scene the most along with her best friend.

Or rather, there were a lot of other people too near them.

「There is no time so I'll postpone the trial for later. For now let's just decide that Nii-san is guilty.」

「The decision is already settled before the trial!? Or rather, I was unconscious until just now though!」

Airi wearing pilot suit was staring coldly. Lux who was similarly wearing a new pilot suit retorted back.

「Even though we were fighting desperately, young man was having a secret affair with Rosa on the bed. This is an unforgivable act.....」

Similarly Soffice also retorted expressionlessly in exasperation.

「Haa..... Even though the situation is like this, Onii-chan is still like usual.....」

Mel who had trace of childishness remaining in her face was lamenting while pressing her forehead.

「Lux-kun. I was really worried for you, you know?」

Aeril was smiling cheerfully, but the area around her eyes were tinged with dark shadow.

「Don't be too hard on him Aeril. Well, this guy is also a man so it can't be helped.」

「Yes, there is this popular saying that great man have great fondness for sensual pleasures.」

「Can you two not adjust casually the truth so it sound like I did it!?」

Lux's breath was roughening when he retorted to Greyfer and Krulcifer's muttering.

「Well, it can't be helped. We can let our guard down like this is also only for a little bit more, so it's better to not leave any regret behind.」

Airi sighed and said that, then she switched the topic.

「Lux-chi. I still don't get just what is going on though.」

「I only heard from them that something outrageous is going on.」

Among them, Tillfur and Sharis were still looking bewildered.

At present, this facility of Avalon—Shelter that had the function as healing as relaxation facility became the gathering place for these members using Aeryl's authority.

The members were Aeryl and Alma from Azure Division camp.

From New Kingdom camp were Krulcifer, Philuffy, Celis, and the Triad.

From the Seven Dragon Paladins were Mel, Greifer, Rosa, and Soffice.

Half of them were getting gradually released from the binding of world revision through the passing of time and their contact with Lux.

「First, the situation right now. Two hours has passed since Nii-san lost consciousness. And then—there is practically no other Drag-Knight. Everyone stop fighting and hide at the surrounding.」

「—Eh?」

Lux was perplexed hearing Airi's sentence.

The battle in this Ancient Forest was done between the camps of New Kingdom against Azure Division.

However in this situation where Alma wasn't taken away and nothing had been settled, for the fighting to end was—.

「The Sacred Eclipse is rampaging. It started attacking anyone it found without caring if it's ally or enemy. It was right after Lux-kun got defeated by the princess.」

Krulcifer saw Lux fighting Lisha and from there she broke through the binding of world revision.

The image of when Lux fought risking his life in order to save Krulcifer overlapped with what she was seeing. That scene became the impetus and she recovered her memory.

She picked up Lux who was shot down, then she joined up for the moment with Alma and Aeryl, and also with Rosa, Soffice, Mel, and Greifer, the elites of Seven Dragon Paladins.

Even so the Drag-Knights of New Kingdom army and Azure Division continued fighting, but Raffi lost herself and began attacking both sides. Because of that the situation changed.

「After that, because damage started to appear for both sides, we acted to bring the situation under control. We traveled to everywhere in Ancient Forest and told them to stop fighting and go hide. Fortunately it ended with only few casualties.」

The nature of Raffi who fused with Sacred Eclipse was changing along with her mental state.

It was just like Lux expected, her fate was to transform into a monster that would lead the world into ruin.

「I finally understood. Why is Lux-kun pretend to lead a fictive organization like Azure Division and try to destroy the New Kingdom——」

Seeing from the result, Raffi applied Baptism to the members of Syvalles and they were able to break through the binding of perception manipulation, but perhaps there was none of them who noticed Raffi's abnormality until the end.

In order to remove a secret and unknown threat, he fought as the New Kingdom's enemy on the surface.

「.....but」

Lux looked down with a dark expression.

In the end, he didn't succeed.

He lost against Lisha in the last battle, and like this——.

「-.....! Wait, Lisha-sama is」

「Calm down Lux-kun. She is safe——for now at least.」

With how Lisha wasn't present at this place, it meant that she was still under the binding of world revision.

「Even Queen Raffi is opening up her heart only to Lisha who is her step daughter it seems, she is still not attacking her. But, there is no more time. We have to——save her.」

「Yes.....」

Lux nodded at Celis's words.

He understood what he had to do no matter what.

He had to head to Lisha who was most likely at Raffi's side and destroyed Sacred Eclipse.

In other words—he had to finish Raffi who became a monster.

Before Lisha was harmed by Raffi who completely lost her reason.

Of course, by doing that he would end up directly confronting Lisha who was still under misunderstanding due to perception manipulation.

The opponent was the two remaining Automatas and the Sacred Eclipse.

Their current fighting strength consisted of quite the lineup but, they were greatly exhausted and couldn't display even half of their true strength.

(In the end, can we win in our current state? Against that Sacred Eclipse, and Lisha-sama—)

It would be hard.

Or rather, wasn't it impossible?

In the worst case he wanted to at least rescue Lisha from Raffi's side, but it was unthinkable that they could go to Sacred Eclipse's side and then returned back without harm.

That would be even more true if the ego of Raffi who was fixated to her step daughter was remaining.

And then, the current him also couldn't use the power of Baptism.

While he was thinking that, Krulcifer quietly came to in front of him.

「Lux-kun. I'm sorry to ask you this in this kind of time but—can I ask you to decide?」

「.....」

「We'll we fight or escape? Perhaps we will be able to escape. But—if we do that then we won't be able to return to this Ancient Forest anymore.」

「Yeah. Your big bro will most likely rewrite our perception. I've got a bad news here, Grand Force was taken away just a little while ago. As soon as this battle is over—no, if Fugil head to Garden after this, there won't be anyone who can stop the world revision.」

「——」

Lux held his breath in shock at Greifer's words.

If Fugil decided that this battle was over and activated the seven Ruins in parallel with Avalon, a world revision in its complete form would start.

If that happened, then this time for sure—Lux and everyone else would completely forget.

Even the fact that this battle occurred.

And about Lisha who was devoured and absorbed by Sacred Eclipse too.

「.....」

Since just now Lux was unable to answer those questions.

Even though he had understood the answer from the start.

Even though he had decided that there was no path of withdrawing without saving Lisha.

With his current self, he didn't feel like he would be able to win against those two.

「Can everyone—, leave me alone for a bit?」

No.

Even though those weren't the words that he wanted to say.

Even though he who started this battle had to be the one to unite everyone.

「—Okay. Let's allow Lux-kun to rest. His stamina also still hasn't come back yet.」

Krulcifer sensed something from Lux's expression and told everyone that.

「But Nii-san, there is no more time. Whether we're going to retreat or fight—if it's not decided in around ten more minutes—」

「Right. Thirty minutes, no.....give me twenty minutes.」

He somehow answered so and the gathered people moved to the adjacent room.

Lux sat on the bed and stared fixedly to one point on the silver wall.

「What—should I do?」

He should have resolved himself to fight since a long time ago.

But, in the fight against Lisha, why was he unable to use the Baptism that was applied to his body?

Even though he was thinking that it would be just what he wanted if he was defeated after giving his all, even though he had asked for help from

everyone who came with him.

What was making him hesitating at this point of time?

『You cannot even be aware of your own weakness. You only avert your eyes from your own kingship. Saying that you can't win when you don't even fight—as expected from the Weakest Undefeated.』

The words that the illusion of Singlen inside his consciousness told him.

It wasn't something that the real Singlen told him.

The phantom was made to say those words by the image inside Lux .

「Lisha-sama. I——」

The few words that leaked out weren't heard by anyone else.

「Haa, haa.....! How is the situation at present, Fugil?」

「I patrolled around the 『Center』 area but..... The result of this war is as good as decided already.」

The Center of Avalon. Inside the room that was surrounded by silver wall and countless gears rotating, Raffi was lying down on a simple bed.

Her dress was tattered. There was no wound on her body, but her whole body was wrapped in a sense of lethargy.

She unleashed the power o Sacred Eclipse that fused with her and her consciousness cut off when she was in the middle of fighting.

What's more it wasn't just for several minutes but for hours.

When she noticed there was only the Automata Arshalia beside her. Fugil was accomplishing a certain mission when Lux was defeated by Lisha.

The mission was the preliminary arrangements for the objective that Raffi would carry out after this.

Azure Division continued to escape while carrying the Grand Force, but two Automatas chased after it using their radar and secured the crystal.

The Gear Leader who managed the first Ruin Babel that was located in New Kingdom, Yos Tork was destroyed in the battle against Yoruka.

Similarly the Gear Leader that managed the third Ruin Ark, La Cruche was defeated and destroyed by Rosa.

The Gear Leader that manage the fifth Ruin Gigas, Er Fajura was destroyed by Philuffy and Lux.

The Gear Leader that managed the sixth Ruin Garden, Clan Lieze was destroyed by Lux when he took back Aeryl and Grand Force.

The Gear Leader that managed the seventh Ruin Moon, Re Plica was destroyed by Soffice.

「So our remaining fighting strength is also not many.....」

If Arshalia of the Ruin number zero Avalon was excluded, the remaining Automata was only two.

The Gear Leader of the second Ruin Dungeon, Lu Caria and, the Gear Leader of the fourth Ruin Hall, Nei Louches.

A considerable time was necessary to repair the Gear Leaders once more.

The fighting strength of New Kingdom which was Celis and Philuffy were also defeated. Krulcifer apparently dispelled the binding in her consciousness and sided with Lux.

「The enemy is also capable aren't they..... Facing us who was thoroughly prepared, they resisted until this far—as expected from the Black Hero who accomplished the revolution five years ago.」

From the contact of the Automata that was fighting near Lisha, Raffi confirmed that the leader of Azure Division was Lux as expected.

The recovery of the stolen Grand Force had succeeded, and Fugil was going to the Garden to set it back.

If the system of the Ruins was revived, it would become possible to do world revision using Uroboros once more.

After that they would only need to carry it out in this Center without being obstructed by anyone.

「So it will take some more time until the energy for Uroboros to execute world revision is charged.」

「Yes—. Please leave the security to the Automatons.」

「 I can feel rest assured with that. More importantly, what about Lisha.....my daughter——? 」

Raffi kept lying down while her right hand powerlessly reached out to empty air.

「 She followed your order and headed out to attack the enemy. It seems the enemies are in Avalon's facility Shelter using the authority of the Lord Aeril Arcadia. The binding in Princess Lisha's consciousness isn't dispelled even after her battle against Lux. She is our side's ally. 」

The Gear Leader of Avbalon Arshalia said that.

Then tension left Raffi's whole body in relieve.

「 I see. So they escaped to there..... Then, I too have to go there. 」

「 No——, the remaining two Automatas are already heading there with your daughter. 」

「 I have to go exactly because of that. 」

Raffi shook her head slightly in respond to what Arshalia pointed out.

「 I cannot make that child to shoulder all the burden. 」

In that face, the true feeling of Raffi whose ego should have been mostly taken away by Sacred Eclipse was remaining.

Chapter 4

Love And Duel

「.....」

Lux entered a certain treatment device in the Shelter facility to recover his stamina.

Although he had rested for two hours, he would still be far from being perfectly rested even with the addition twenty minutes of recovery.

Lisha too was most likely recovering her energy through two hours of rest.

When they fought once more, would Lux be able to win?

No one entered inside the room.

He felt great feeling of isolation that he had never felt before just from that.

(I have to fight..... And yet, why am I hesitating now?)

He closed his eyes and thought, but the answer wouldn't appear.

He didn't even notice that the danger was already closing in at the surface of the Shelter.

「——As expected, it became like this.」

Beside the treatment room where Lux was resting.

At the screen inside a large room that was also the entrance of the teleportation device to the surface, Krulcifer and others were watching the situation outside.

「Survivors of Azure Division. I know that you all are hiding inside there. Get out of that facility right now and release Aeril. Tell this to my little sister, Alma Atismata too!」

On the surface was Lizsharte and masked Drag-Knights that were Automatas waiting beside her.

Lisha herself was still under the binding of world revision.

She was thinking that Automatons obeying her at her side were also just Drag-Knight of the new Kingdom army.

「I'll give you three minutes. If you don't get out during that time, I'll fire at that facility with Seven Heads. It'll be the same even if you give no answer. Prepare yourself.」

The scenery above the underground where the Shelter was hidden.

The screen on the silver wall which projected that image were watched by the people who gathered there.

Celis, Philuffy, Rosa, Soffice, and then Airi and the Triad still hadn't recovered from their exhaustion.

It was because the treatment device and energy were mostly focused for Lux's recovery.

While everyone was bewildered in this cornered situation, Krulcifer was the first one who stood up from the sofa.

「Mel, Greyfer. You two still have spare energy right? I'll give you two the spotlight of saving this world.」

Krulcifer in her pilot suit brushed up her long blue hair and announced that.

「I'll make that princess wake up. I want to leave the remaining two Automata to you two.」

「You're saying something exaggerated like giving spotlight but you're just pushing troublesome work to other people.」

「Good grief, you lady really work people hard.」

Although, because Mel and Greyfer had also faced Nier and Dawla of the four great nobles as their opponent each, they also had some exhaustion remaining in them.

And so, although it wasn't wrong that they were the right choice for going out to fight among the lineup here, it would become a hard battle for them.

「Is it okay, Krulcifer? I know that you too have become strong but」

The senior Celis said that to her.

「Princess, she look strong. Perhaps, compared to before this is the most——」

Even Philuffy who wasn't saying anything until now said that about the heat filling up Lisha's body.

「I know. I understand just how powerful of an enemy she is, more than anyone here.」

Lisha still hadn't been freed from the binding of world revision even after receiving Baptism and fighting Lux directly wasn't just because of coincidence.

「She is sympathizing and loving her step mother Queen Raffi. That's why she can't realize. And then she is getting stronger due to that strength of will.」

In order to protect the New Kingdom—, to protect her step mother who tasted the same suffering like her and still stood up.

The fighting spirit dwelling inside that body was blazing.

When someone was deceived, when they didn't notice falsehood, what clouded their eyes the most was because they didn't want to believe.

Lux was turning into enemy, Raffi had become a monster, she didn't want to believe such things.

That was why—, Lisha was still unable to escape from the world of dream.

「Lux-kun tried to end this without her noticing anything. However, that is no good.」

「No good you say, what do you mean by that? Are you saying that Onii-chan's way of thinking is mistaken?」

Mel who had heard about the plan for this case from the meeting before this asked Krulcifer.

She heard how inside this world where the world revision was carried out and people were unable to realize the truth, Lux tried to defeat Raffi and Fugil without being known by anyone.

「Yes, that's right.」

Krulcifer answered right away without a shred of hesitation.

Greyfer normally didn't harbor any interest about things like complicated circumstance, but he tilted his head in puzzlement at this reaction.

「Ain't that strange? I get it that his way is reckless but, either way that prince got no other way right? Then——」

「No, it's mistaken. The mistaken one is none other than Lux-kun himself. It's due to an important factor that even he himself don't realize. That's why—I have to carry this out, as his substitute.」

Waking up Lisha in the middle of fight, by the mean of fight.

With that resolve in her chest, Krulcifer stepped into the teleportation device.



「One more minute. I'll start attacking if you don't surrender.」

At the surface, Lisha was waiting for the main members of Azure Division to appear while wearing Tiamat.

After fighting Lux, Lisha also used up her strength and fainted, but when she woke up, the repair of her Drag-Ride was finished by Automata Arhsalia who was ordered by Raffi.

She was told that the repair was done using Ruin's facility, but she didn't realize that the facility in question was the Center of Avalon.

No, the current Lisha was unable to perceive the current situation correctly.

Due to the perception manipulation by Uroboros, there was the supplemented effect Lisha could accept any fact that was inconvenient for Raffi.

「Your highness, there is no more time dearimasu. Firing now will be——」

The masked girl Drag-Knight who was dispatched by Raffi as her guard urged Lisha from the side.

Lisha didn't even notice anything unnatural about their setting as Divine Drag-Ride user that Raffi inherited from Prime Minister Nulph.

「That's right you know.....」

Similarly a girl with mechanical cat ears also urged similarly from the opposite side.

「I said that but, with Aeryl as hostage, I can't do anything rough. It's also the same with my little sister Alma. Even if give warning shot—or attacking for real, I can only do it by digging through the outer wall using drill.」

The moment Lisha answered the two's questions resolutely, particles of light whirled on the ground below them.

「I'm relieved. You still have your own mind. Looks like you aren't brainwashed by Ragnarok.」

「——Krulcifer. Why are you there?」

The blue haired girl wearing Divine Drag-Ride Fafnir quietly brushed up her front hair and smiled.

「You think of at least the reason by your own head right? If you're a princess of a country then——」

「.....This isn't the time for stupid conversation right!?!」

Lisha raised her eyebrows at the cool reply of the girl and replied.

「You're right. This isn't the time for that. This world will head to destruction soon. If we don't defeat Sacred Eclipse before it start moving, then all of us will be killed.」

「What are you saying!? What are you——」

Lisha who was irritated by Krulcifer's puzzling words pulled out the Sword Device on her waist angrily.

At the same time, Krulcifer aimed the sniper rifle of her Fafnir and pointed the muzzle to Lisha.

「The current you won't understand even if I tell you using your words. That's why let's fight.」

Bam-! She pulled the trigger with minimum preparatory movement.

The bullet of Freezing Cannon was fired from the ground to air. It drew a straight blue trajectory, but it was deflected by a crimson Divine Drag-Ride that leaped in front of Lisha.

「——Don't get in the way, dearimasu. You traitor of New Kingdom.」

The Automata with mechanical ears that looked like do ears growing from her head, Ney Louches howled that.

Flame burst up from the armor of Divine Drag-Ride Salamander that she was wearing. She glared at Krulcifer with a sharp killing intent.

She was acquainted with this girl who was the Gear Leader of Ymir Theocracy's Hall, but there wasn't any trace of that time in her right now.

Her personality must have been completely rewritten by the memory data stored in Avalon.

But, now wasn't the time to immerse herself in such sentimentality.

The two remaining Automata existed as terrifying threat.

「Mel, Greyfer, I'll count on you two just as planned. I'll have my hand full to defeat her so——」

「Haah. I'll count this as a favor owed.」

「Well, those two are troublesome opponents in their own right yeah. Those puppets——」

Mel and Greyfer who went out stepped forward along with the Divine Drag-Ride in respond.

The Gear Leader of Dungeon, Lu Calia was also stepping forward with a serious face and weapon in hand.

「Do you think you can defeat me Krulcifer? You who are a traitor of New Kingdom!」

「I'll defeat you. For the sake of Lux-kun too——」

Lisha and Krulcifer.

The two's gazes intersected and they moved.

On the other side Mel and Greyfer also confronted Automata Ney Louches and Lu Calia. The duel of three versus three broke out.

「So it's finally, started.....」

At the facility hidden underground Avalon, Shelter, Celis spoke while watching the screen that was projected on the silver wall.

The surface's scene.

In order to hold back Lisha who perceived Azure Division as enemy, Krulcifer and Seven Dragon Paladins had to fight. This situation and the fact that she couldn't join the battle pained her heart.

「This is pathetic. I who is the senior in Syvalles can only watch like this is——」

Celis said that and looked down with a cloudy expression.

「Don't feel down because of that Celis-san. Just being able to break through the binding of Uroboros is already amazing.」

The silver haired girl Aeryl consoled her.

Celis's exhaustion was especially great because of the mental pollution of Ragnarok Iblis that she received from Raffi who fused with Sacred Eclipse.

The treatment device of Shelter was also yielded to Lux, so she was mostly relying only on her natural recovery.

「Yeep yeep. The likes of us is still half in doubt even now you know? We are only believing because everyone is saying so and everyone is believing it.」

「No. When you're the one speaking, it makes me become unnecessary anxious so please stop it Tillfur.」

「Yeah. Most likely that, the effect of Uroboros is getting thinner right now but.....」

Tillfur, Noct, and Sharis said their opinion in turn.

At the previous time—the world revision of the third parade ended incompletely due to the obstruction of Lux and others, so in the battle of this Ancient Forest most people were able to see the false scene created by perception manipulation and the how the truth and the messed up truth.

The Triad, half of the Seven Dragon Paladins, and also Lisha must be the same.

Exactly because of that Lisha was unable to believe it even now after she had seen Lux.

The members remaining here were thinking that should be the case.

But.

「.....This is just perhaps but, I got the feeling that she has noticed. The princess. But, I think she is pretending to not notice.」

Philuffy who was watching the screen on the silver wall muttered that with an absentminded expressionless face.

She was also the same like Celis, after battling Lux she recovered her mind and now she was in the middle of recuperation.

「She has realized? What is it.....that she has realized?」

Airi spontaneously threw a question at what Philuffy said.

The binding on Lisha's perception isn't dispelled.

Exactly because of that she wasn't accepting that Lux was the real one. That was the thought of Airi and others.

「Surely, Lu-chan is also the same. That's why—I think it's necessary. For them to look at the truth.」

Philuffy did nothing but staring at the battle on the surface through the screen while saying that.

「I don't have any business with youu. Please die alreadyy.」

The Automata with mechanical cat ears, Lu Calia was charging at Greyfer wearing unknown Divine Drag-Ride.

In respond the blond haired young man replied without even hiding his displeased expression.

「The mood is ruined yeah. I have to face some bunch with screwy look, wearing cat ears or dog ears like this!」

「Could it be, you like this kind of thing?」

Right beside him Mel who was also facing an Automata made fun of him. The young man spat out with an exasperated expression.

「I agree with these guys' words yeah. I'm only facing them because I've got to.」

The flying type Divine Drag-Ride Cuelebre that Greyfer was wearing possessed both hard armor and mobility.

What was piloted by Lu Caria who was facing him was a Drag-Ride decorated with mechanical feathers that he had never seen before.

Greyfer naturally didn't have any way to learn about the true color of the Divine Raiment and special armament of the Automata, but he charged right from the front and slashed with his special armament, the snake sword Tail Blade.

「You're suddenly coming so forcefully isn't itt」

「No matter how much you think it won't start if you don't test it, that's my policy.」

Unlike a normal slash that drew a straight arc, the Tail Blade had several joints in the Blade that divided it into several parts. It was able to bend like whip.

Therefore it aimed at the shoulder of enemy Divine Drag-Ride with spiraling trajectory but—.

GIIN! The tip shifted and hit the edge of the Blade that the enemy readied.

It was rare for the first attack to hit the opponent, so if that was all then it wasn't a big deal.

But, the Hungry Wolf Greyfer who was a veteran of many battles instantly detected that abnormality and put up his guard.

「.....What is this? Was it the Divine Raiment of your Divine Drag-Ride just now?」

「That's rightt. It's the power of my Quetzalcoatl.」

「Hah!」

Greyfer smiled wryly at Lu Calia's reply.

「An enemy is honestly answering when I'm asking her secret. I really got underestimated here.」

「It's unreasonable to get hated like this even though I answered your question.」

「Greyfer, this isn't the time to play around.」

Mel who was fighting Ney Louches nearby grumbled.

But, Greyfer himself sensed it more than anyone that this wasn't an opponent who he could face carelessly.

The opponent before his eyes was more abnormal than any enemy he had fought until now. She possessed a terrifying power—.

「I'll see through it with my own strength, the true identity of that Divine Raiment of yours!」

Vun, energy was put into the back wings of Cuelebre and he assaulted Quetzalcoatl once more.

In respond Lu Calia drew out her Sword Device and sent her thought into it silently. Then a Blade that was the same with the middle sized Blade in her right armored arm was summoned into her left hand too.

「You purposefully summoned an additional one but it's just a normal Blade? I really can't get a read on you. What the hell are you planning?」

「Weell, you will get it bit by bit. Also, this Blade is just a normal Blade you know? Don't worry.」

「Even that impudent talk of yours is going to stop here.」

Greyfer was irritated by the expression and tone of Lu Calia who was playing stupid. He closed in to her instantly and attacked.

The consecutive attacks of Tail Blade that drew spiraling trajectory struck with a momentum like raging waves.

「Waa. You're strong aren't youu?」

「You can still screwing around even with this huh?」

The slashing Tail Blade entangled around the medium sized Blade of Lu Calia. It was pulled and knocked away from her armored arm.

He then further entangled the other sword so she lost both her weapons, then he slashed at Quetzalcoatl.

「Drop dead, you damn doll who participated in world destruction!」

「I don't wannaa」

Greyfer aimed at the torso of Quetzalcoatl that Lu Calia wore with a full powered attck.

The barrier should be torn apart with the Automata's stomach severed, but the blade shifted slightly and struck the Blade that the enemy readied.

「.....!?!」

The two Blades that Greyfer knocked down were below him.

In other words, Quetzalcoatl had summoned two more weapons into its hands once more.

(This fellow, how many damn weapons she has registered? Or is she creating them?)

A normal Drag-Ride had limited number of weapons that it could summon additionally.

That was because considerable energy was required to teleport equipment that was placed in faraway place.

「It's Quetzalcoatl's special armament you know. It's called PaletteThree Colors Bird but—, it can summon the weapon that has been registered beforehand until 100 timeses.」

——*Dozu-!*

「Gu, a.....!」

At the same time with that slow reply, the tip of the Blade that was held by Quetzalcoatl's armored arm was stabbed to the armor of Greyfer's Cuelebre.

He immediately strengthened his barrier and managed to reduce the damage to his flesh body, but the shock of the impact stopped his movement for a moment.

「That's why, it's pointless even if you take away my weapon you know」

In addition, the other Blade was swung down straight from above. Greyfer was hit fully by that attack too.

Because it was also hitting the barrier he wasn't wounded fatally, but his shoulder was struck and the power output of his Drag-Ride decreased.

Mel who was seeing that from slightly behind immediately raised her voice.

「Wai-, what are you doing there Greyfer! No matter who reckless you're because you're tough, if you get hit directly like that—」

「Shut up! Focus on your own fight!」

Greyfer cursed while feeling shocked in his heart.

(I know something like that already! I tried to dodge this damn fellow's attacks just now in a hair breadth's difference. And yet they still hit!)

In addition, the attack that Greyfer launched was missing just barely from the point he aimed.

But, he didn't understand how the enemy was—how Lu Calia was achieving that.

She didn't show any sign at all that she was predicting his movement.

The strange mystery that Lu Calia and Quetzalcoatl brought.

He would have no chance of victory if he didn't see through it.

「It's just like what that pointy head said dearimasu. It's important to have wide field of vision but, not being able to focus on the enemy in front of you is a sign of a third rate.」

「It's not like I'm underestimating you. It just mean I have that much of composure.」

At the adjacent airspace more than 10 ml away from Greyfer's battlefield, Automat Ley Nouches and Mel Greyfer exchanging words while holding back each other.

「Then, I'll make you realize dearimasu. That all of you aren't a match against us when we're serious.」

The four legged crimson Divine Drag-Ride, Salamander that was being used by Ney Louches had been explained just now by she herself.

Just like Mel predicted from the ornamental coating that looked like blazing flame, the Divine Raiment seemed to control flame.

The Pike weapon the opponent was holding created oil and spurted it out from the tip. By coating the opponent's frame directly with that, it would create flame that couldn't be extinguished easily. It was a terrifying thing.

If the oil was exposed to high heat it would induce overheating and the Drag-Ride's power output would also go down, but even more than that the flesh and blood human inside wouldn't be able to endure.

If she was hit by the attack fully in succession, she would die in the blink of eye.

Mel who instinctually sensed that decided to take on Ney Louches.

The convertible Divine Drag-Ride Ddraig Gweiber that Mel wore had Divine Raiment, Dual Shift. It could freely control temperature.

Even attack using flame could be neutralized.

What she found incomprehensible was how the enemies easily allowed them to establish the situation of two versus two that should be disadvantageous for them.

(The enemy is Automata. They should have grasped the data of the Divine Drag-Ride we're using. And yet, why——)

Mel was on her guard like that at the corner of her mind.

Were they confident that they would be able to overturn some disadvantage?

No, five Automata were already done in, so it was impossible for them to be that haughty.

(The answer won't come out even if I think about it right now..... then——)

She only needed to prioritize cornering the enemy until she finished collecting information.

At present Mel and Greyfer were fighting without getting away too far from there. Rather than for supporting each other, it was to not let the enemy attacked the underground Shelter where everyone was on standby.

No matter what happened, one of them could possibly head for the Shelter's protection.

「I don't know what you're scheming but, it's naïve if you think you can win against us with strength of that level.」

Mel flew with the convertible Divine Drag-Ride Ddraig Gweiber's flight form and drew near to Salamander in a straight line.

She twisted her body to dodge the flame Pike that immediately struck at her. Then she struck using the Halberd in her hand toward the opponent's side.

Gakii!

「 —! 」

But, the trajectory shifted slightly and her Halberd was blocked by the Pike's handle.

「 That's a clumsy attack dearimasu. Though it can't be helped when you're still akid. 」

Ney didn't overlook the instant of stiffening due to Mel's attack missing and used the long handle of her spear like a fist to mow down Ddraig Gweiber's torso instead.

At the same time due to the oil showering Ddraig Gweiber, its armor was about to burst into flame, but that flame instantly vanished.

The armor's surrounding was turned into super low temperature using Dual Shift's temperature manipulation, stopping the combustion.

「 I see, your use of Divine Raiment is perfect dearimasu. I've a better opinion of you now. But——what about this? Flame NovaHeaven and Earth Creation ! 」

The armor of Salamander that Ney Louches wore emitted the light of Divine Raiment. Right after that, *gou*, intense flame rose up from the surrounding.

The area of Ancient Forest that hid Shelter underground was enveloped in flame in the blink of eye.

「You—what have you done!」

Ney Louches unleashed fire to the forest without even batting an eyelid. Mel frowned at her.

Lisha and Krulcifer were at some distance away so they didn't get dragged in, but the range was too wide.

The flame would rapidly spread if it was left alone. If they were careless than the whole forest would be enveloped in flame.

Was the opponent meaning to say that even the Drag-Knights of New Kingdom army who were hiding nearby didn't matter?

(Me thinking that the enemy might still show composure—was naïve. The Automata are intending to wrest away victory in this battle no matter what.)

The comrades remaining in the facility below—the Shelter were all powerful people, but almost all of them weren't in the state that could wear Drag-Ride.

If the enemy turned the whole area into a sea of flame and killed them, then their victory would be assured just from that.

「—Kuh, Dual Shift!」

In respond Mel also immediately attempted to extinguish the fire below by decreasing temperature.

As though she had been waiting for that moment, Salamander closed the distance with a jump. She attacked Mel and Ddraig Gweiber.

「Ku.....aa-!」

The thrusts of spear clad in flame that was unlashd in quick succession.

Mel skillfully moved her Halberd and swiped away those attacks, even so she couldn't block half of the attacks and her armor was shaved.

Oil was splashed on her. The flame scorching the surface of her armor couldn't be extinguished right away.

「Sharpened concentration is required in using Divine Raiment dearimasu. That is even truer when using it in wide range. Will you be able to protect your comrades while fighting me dearimasu?」

「For that....., you aimed at the Shelter below? That's really a cowardly method you're using isn't it?」

Mel who finally extinguished the flames dotting her armor glared at Ney.

「Cowardly is the complaints of fool who cannot break through their present situation dearimasu. Though it can't be helped for a kid to be like that.」

「—Hah, now you're talking.」

Mel laughed off the provocation, but here she noticed how terrifyingly disadvantageous the position she was put into.

The flame below should have been extinguished just now, but Salamander torched the forest once more and it was beginning to spread.

(So this girl is intentionally paired with me who have Ddraig Gweiber is for this.)

Mel was able to extinguish Salamander's flame using the temperature manipulation of Divine Raiment Dual Shift.

But, if she executed temperature manipulation that instantly extinguished burning flame in wide range several times, her stamina would be greatly exhausted.

She was a genius Drag-Knight without match in Ymir Theocracy, but Mel was still a thirteen years old girl. Her stamina was undependable no matter what.

However, if the heat of the flame reached until the Shelter underground, then she would be forced to extinguish the flame.

In contrast Ney Louches who piloted Salamander was only scattering specially made oil and later the trees of the forest would spread the flame further automatically.

At the very least, she was able to spread flame with effort that was overwhelmingly smaller than Mel.

(If this become a drawn-out battle, my stamina will be inevitably reduced and I'll lose! Then—I can only deal with the enemy before that!)

Mel instantly grasped the battle situation and accelerated Ddraig Gweiber.

The special armament that exhaled combustible vapor and ignited it to burn a wide area, Aerial Buster was unusable.

With the surrounding area in flame already, the refined gas would explode right away the moment it was produced.

Furthermore the enemy was fighting near the Shelter, so Ground Buster that destroyed the ground from inside also couldn't be fired.

Almost all of Mel's advantage was taken away the moment the opponent was using Salamander.

「 Naturally, you will try to fight me using normal fighting only dearimasu.」

Mel flew in a straight line and drew near with her Halberd raised up, in respond Ney Louches leaped with an arcing trajectory to run away.

If she slipped between the trees of burning forest, she couldn't be targeted so easily from the sky.

The moment Mel saw that Ney was moving to buy time, she predicted the enemy's escape route and activated her Divine Raiment.

「——Dual Shift! Crumble down from overheating!」

She provided high temperature with the opponent's Divine Drag-Ride as the target.

It was a temperature manipulation attack by the method of causing overheating to induce power down on the enemy Drag-Ride, but Ney Louches and Salamander didn't even twitch.

「 Looks like you have resistance to heat just as expected. That Drag-Ride is——」

「 Naturally dearimasu. A fire lizard that got done in by its own flame cannot even become a joke. This Drag-Ride has special armament, Red ProofCocoon of Flame dearimasu.」

Like that Ney informed the name of special armament of heat isolation that was applied on Salamander's shell.

In addition, the other special armament the Pike attacked at Mel.

「 Heat ZoneDragon Flame Thorn !」

Mel and Ddraig Gweiber tried to strike with their Halberd while swooping down. In respond Ney and Salamander thrust up from the ground using their Pike.

The spear's tip emitted flame that acted as blinder. It aimed to thrust through Mel's human face.

「How uncouth to try to burn a woman's face like this」

But Mel dodged it so that it only slightly grazed the armor on her head, and without stopping hse landed on the ground.

Without delay she used the recoil of the landing impact and charged forward. Her Halberd's attack landed on Ney.

「Uguh!? Since when, it became.....land battle type dearimasu!?!」

The attack that was done while she was swooping down was a feint from the start. The attack after she transformed into land battle type was the main attack.

Convertible Divine Drag-Ride Ddraig Gweiber was rare even throughout the world. It could freely switch between land or midair battle skillfully.

The flight form before she approached near was advantageous for holding the enemy in check, but it was far stronger in close range when the strategy had been carried out like this.

「It's a big mistake if you think that I'm solely relying on Divine Raiment and special armament you know?」

Despite being the youngest Seven Dragon Paladins, she was called as prodigy Drag-Knight.

As though to show it off, Mel surpassed Ney with her fighting skill.

Salamander tried to escape using its four legs to leap away, in respond Mel skated with her Drag-Ride's wheels and quickly approached.

That piloting technique that easily cleared the unfavorable area deep inside the forest with snow piling up on the ground made Ney opened her eyes wide in shock.

「In this terrain, in this environment, you can pilot the Drag-Ride to that degree dearimasu?」

「There is no way me who came from Ymir Theocracy will falter just from this much snow isn't it?」

The special equipment type Divine Drag-Ride Salamander couldn't stop the power of land battle type.

Even when she used camouflage to escape, there was no time for that.

Each time she blocked the Halberd's attack, Salamander's armor and mobile frame creaked and she was getting cornered.

Even when she tried to escape by leaping into flame, Mel extinguished the flame around her in that instant using Divine Raiment of temperature manipulation and pursued.

The decision Mel that brought this into a decisive battle of brief duration was correct.

Except one thing.

The Automata they faced. Ney Louches and Lu Calia's plan, if it was included—.

(I'm stronger than her. And yet—why? I can't defeat her! It's just one more step!)

Mel rushed to bring down Ney with all her strength, but she was feeling something was out of place.

Ney Louches was also desperately enduring Mel's fierce attack, but that wasn't the reason why she couldn't defeat her.

Every single one of the Halberd attack Mel swung missed the target.

(Is my attack swinging too hastily because of my impatience? No, such thing is—)

Impossible. That was Mel's judgment.

Furthermore Ney sometimes was also giving support to the other Automata—Lu Calia by sending flame attack.

She didn't want to be thought as holding back Greyfer.

However, the stamina of Mel who was covering up Greyfer due to her obstinacy suddenly reached the limit.

「A, aa.....」

The power output of her Drag-Ride decreased sharply and she became unable to pursue Ney and Salamander who were fighting while retreating.

Ney who was wearing a half destroyed Divine Drag-Ride sent a relieved expression at Mel.

「It's finally bearing fruit dearimasu. Our plan that is—」

「Haa, haa.....」

Mel's breathing was roughening.

Inside the forest that was enveloped in flame since some time ago.

Mel did her best to not inhale the smoke and fire sparks, but she didn't imagine that she would end up lacking oxygen.

Due to the great amount of flame, the air at the surrounding was thinning. There the compensation of her going into offense that was thoroughly burdening her body became an exhaustion of stamina that attacked her.

Mel herself didn't know about the gas called carbon dioxide, but a pilot of Drag-Ride would at least know that the air in high place was thin.

She was sensing that the same phenomenon was happening to her.

(I can't, win anymore..... At the very least, Krulcifer. If you manage to do something about Lizsharte—)

Mel sensed that the chance of her defeat was increasing and lifted her face from the ground.

Her gaze that was filled with a faint hope was taken away by the intense battle that was developing at the sky above.

「I'll allow you to surrender if you do it now, Krulcifer. Even if you're going mad, I have no leeway to go easy on you after all.」

「I'm relieved hearing that. I was thinking that I want to try fighting you seriously once one day.」

Greyfer and Lu Calia.

Mel and Ney Louches . They were fighting near the Shelter. At the same time.

Lisha who was the main force of New Kingdom and Krulcifer who was the only remaining fighting strength at Lux's side were confronting each other.

They both had been strengthened by Baptism and they were also in perfect condition.

And then through the repeated mock battles between fellow Syvalles members, they also fully knew about each other's hands.

Exactly because of that their true worth was questioned.

How had they polished themselves until now, and what kind of path they would walk from here on.

「Here I come, princess.」

「Come, Krulcifer! I'll open your eyes!」

Right after they exchanged those words of duel, they both started to move.

The Divine Drag-Ride Tiamat that Lisha was piloting and Fafnir that Krulcifer was piloting.

Both specialized in long range attack and mobility, but their disposition was completely different.

Tan-!

First Krulcifer pulled the trigger of Freezing Cannon and fired the preemptive sniping shot.

The freezing bullet that was fired from the special armament sniper rifle would seal the opponent's movement with certainty if it hit even once.

In respond Lisha blocked it using one Legion as shield, at the same time she aimed at Krulcifer using the remaining eleven projectile weapons.

「Wise Blood!」

Krulcifer wasted no time to sense Lisha's aim using the Divine Raiment of future prediction.

She made full use of Fafnir's mobility and avoided with large movement so that the opponent's aim couldn't narrow into her.

「You suddenly rely on foresight without even trying to predict each other?」

「I'm amazed you can say that while using this kind of attack. You yourself—isn't serious.」

Krulcifer smiled wryly at Lisha's provocation while responding back.

From the future prediction she saw Lisha driving lethal consecutive attacks on her.

In the shadow of Legion, Lisha also fired pursuing Legion in a position that the opponent couldn't see. It was her technique Hide ShotConcealed Sniping .

The instant Fafnir's automatic shields, Auto Shield blocked it, Lisha would make gravity field using Divine Raiment Suppressor and crucified Krulcifer instantly.

And then using her main cannon Seven Heads, she would destroy her armor from above the guard.

That was Lisha's sure kill combo, but if Krulcifer was fixated with sniping and stopped moving then she would be instantly defeated.

She affirmed that fact once more and strengthened her vigilance.

Fafnir was a powerful frame, but it had to be said that it had no firepower to decide the battle in an instant.

It had to accurately sniped the Force Core, or go through the process of sealing the opponent's movement using freezing bullet before dealing the finishing blow.

(But, the princess is also familiar with long range attack. She has the eyes that can see through her opponent's sniping.)

The possibility of her reading the habit of Krulcifer's sniping that went through the fastest and shortest route was especially high.

Of course if she dodged with simple movement, Krulcifer could snipe at Lisha's landing point using her Divine Raiment's prediction.

Therefore continuing to move in an illogical route that didn't reflect her own thought was the method to dodge Fafnir's sniping. Lisha knew that.

Krulcifer had also prepared the method to destroy that countermeasure.

In order to accurately measure the opponent's movement, she could just make the opponent to have no leeway.

When she became unable to do anything except choosing the best movement, the reading of Wise Blood would be completely and the scenario to reach the finish would be written.

(In other words, it's essential to steal the opponent's weapon first even if it takes time.)

Krulcifer concluded so and sniped continuously using a mix of normal bullet and freezing bullet even knowing that it would be dodged.

On the other hand it would be troublesome to dodge all of Lisha's Legion that were approaching her in pursuit, but she also had an idea about how to

deal with that.

「—Freezing Cannon.」

The Legion that was fired to aim at Krulcifer was frozen using freezing bullet and fell down.

She dodged the remaining attacks by flying in the air to dodge and repeated the same thing.

Of course, she didn't let her guard down against Seven Heads and Suppressor.

Two, three, four.

When she was shooting down a third of the twelve projectile weapons just like planned, Krulcifer sighed in relieve.

But, right after that,

「The usual tactic huh, there isn't any art in it, Krulcifer!」

「-.....!?!」

Lisha yelled, at the same time she deployed her Divine Raiment the gravity field in wide range.

The whole area of sky where Lisha and Krulcifer were flying around was covered with purple light.

(My goodness, for the Suppressor to be applied in this wide range....., but—)

She was shocked but also relieved inside at the same time.

(This choice is a blunder that come from impatience. Even if she is going full strength, if it's spread this widely then the gravity burden should be also small.)

And then most importantly, Lisha's stamina should be rapidly exhausted.

Even if she was using this field for null gravity, it wouldn't be hard to deal with it if it was only for dodging.

If she was able to focus on dodging here until the end, Krulcifer would be greatly closer to victory.

The instant she thought that and felt convinced of his victory, she was caught by a strange discomfort.

「—!? Why, the Drag-Ride's movement is—」

She should have piloted Fafnir to ascend with the gravity field's influence included in her calculation, but her altitude was lower than expected.

The remaining eight Legion rotated to surround the bewildered Krulcifer.

They obstructed her movement and created an unseen cage.

「Did you think that I have exposed all of my trump card in my mock battles with you?」

The instant Krulcifer stopped moving after noticing the abnormality, *Dou-!* Tiamat's main cannon Seven Heads fired.

The extremely thick beam of light approached Fafnir in a straight line. It blew Fafnir away along with the Auto Shield.

「Tsu.....! AAH!」

It was too late when Krulcifer noticed the trick behind the wide range gravity magnetic field.

The special armament shield and barrier were pierced. A part of the armor was smashed.

Lisha displayed the specialty of Tiamat that concealed overwhelming destructive power.

「What's that!? What happened?」

「No. I don't understand. Why was Krulcifer-san hit?」

「I get it that Legion surrounded Krulcifer missy and limited her movement. The problem is why she wasn't able to escape. Even though it looked like she was dealing with the gravity burden of Suppressor that was laid out in wide range——」

Seeing the fight that was projected on the screen, Tillfur, Noct, and Sharis were raising bewildered voice each.

Right below the Ancient Forest where deathly battle of three versus three was performed, inside Avalon's rest facility Shelter, everyone present was watching the battle with held breath.

The fighting strength of their side should be sufficient, but when the lid was opened, all three of their fighters were placed in disadvantage.

Even among those three, the exchange of tactic of the fight they were watching right now was especially strange.

「I also don't get it at all. Why did Krulcifer-san of all people made a blunder in her control of Drag-Ride——」

Airi was also muttering that in confusion.

The gravity burden in wide range by Divine Raiment Suppressor.

Krulcifer who was flying inside it mistook her movement destination and she got surrounded by Legion.

She got hit by the main cannon——Seven Heads was simply the result of that.

But, in the first place the gravity burden by Suppressor just now didn't look like it was any threat whatsoever when it was watched from the side.

That was why they were puzzled at Krulcifer who was unable to deal with the slight change of gravity.

「Don't tell me, there is some kind of breakdown in her Drag-Ride——」

Aeril's uneasy guess was only natural.

That was just how much they trusted on the skill of the girl called Krulcifer.

「No, Aeril. You don't know because you haven't stayed in the academy for long but——. Most likely that was a trap from Lisha.」

「.....!？」

Celis who was boasted as the academy strongest considered the happening at the other side of the screen.

Hearing that, Seven Dragon Paladins Rosa beside her lifted her face.

「Trap? That blonde girl....., Princess Lisha only looked like she was creating a weak gravity wield using her Divine Raiment in wide range though?」

Even if she laid out a trap, she shouldn't have any other weapon.

Of course Lisha also had Over Unit but, right now it still hadn't been summoned.

「Yes, that's why, she only has one Suppressor. But if you watch carefully, there was an unnatural phenomenon at that time.」

「Unnatural, phenomenon?」

Soffice parroted those words in question. Then Philuffy who was staying quiet until now—or rather she was basically taciturn so she wouldn't really say anything—opened her mouth.

「The movement of, tree's leaves. The momentum of the snow falling from the tree due to the gravity burden was different depending on the spot.」

「——!？」

The words that Philuffy spoke of caused everyone to show shocked expression wordlessly.

Celis was the only one nodding with a serious expression.

「That's right. Most likely Lisha created gravity field in wide range while differentiating the strength of the field in each spot. It's like the marble pattern. I haven't grasped it accurately, even so it's a big threat to someone who is trying to move normally.」

Especially for a sniper like Krulcifer who paid importance to sense of distance, frame's angle, recoil, and so on more than usual, the gravity burden was differing depending on the spot would be even more troublesome than imagined.

And it would be even truer for her who was using precision and delicate movement as her strong point.

After all she would have to change her reaction in respond to the gravity burden each time she moved.

「The effect will weaken if Divine Raiment is used in wide range. That common sense is used unexpectedly instead to disturb Krulcifer-san's movement slightly and for nothing else, is that what you're saying?」

Celis nodded at Airi's thought.

The proof of that was the difference of the gravity burden that could be sighted using the surrounding trees as comparison.

The speed of the leaf's fluttering, the falling speed of the snow.

Seeing that Celis and Philuffy guessed what happened.

(How astonishing..... They saw through Lisha-sama's trap just from that)

Airi was someone who only started to walk the path as Drag-Knight. But exactly because of that she understood how amazing they were.

But, although the puzzle was solved, it would be difficult to take countermeasure for it.

And then, the fact that Krulcifer and others were put in great disadvantage hadn't changed.

Fugil who got out of the Center of Avalon saw a past phantom inside the snowing forest.

「Ogoh, goaah..... Guogaaa.....!」

It wasn't human.

No, it was a monster who wasn't even worthy to be classified as living thing anymore.

The monster that devoured and absorbed the negative thought of human, Raffi who fused with Sacred Eclipse had her whole body dyed black and transformed into a strange shape.

Her killing intent that bloated up to the extreme sought for even more energy and she was starting to run rampage.

「There is movement outside the Ancient Forest. Is it the soldiers of the four great nobles?」

「Looks like it. Should we head to remove them? If Sacred Eclipse isn't given fodder like this, then it will head to absorb even them.」

Automata Arshalia asked in respond to Fugil's question.

Two hours after the battle in Ancient Forest was halted.

Sacred Eclipse that lost its target of predation reacted to the only battle that was occurring in this forest which was the battle of Lisha and others. It was going to head there.

There might be one more possibility. The several Drag-Knights that were standing guard over Ancient Forest might asked for reinforcement from the New Kingdom using their own judgment.

Raffi ordered the private soldiers of the four great nobles to stand guard over this battle, but it was outside their assumption that the battle would be prolonged by this much.

Therefore, the perception binding by world revision was also starting to come apart.

If a lot of Drag-Knights came from outside the forest as reconnaissance, the rampaging Raffi would devour them and then destroyed New Kingdom itself in the end.

If that happened, there would be no way to stop Sacred Eclipse until it destroyed itself.

「I don't mind, that is also fate. After Sacred Eclipse start running it won't stop until it reach the end point. If that happen that only means the history this time is ending with that.」

「.....」

Fugil answered like that. The Automata stared at him emotionlessly.

To give the order for Sacred Eclipse to stop, energy had to be focused on Avalon temporarily.

But it would take time of nearly half a day in order to do that.

It was because multiple Automata had been made to operate in full power for the sake of this battle.

It was also similar case with the required energy for Uroboros's world revision.

「Li.....sha, my, dau」

Sacred Eclipse dragged itself searching for something.

It moved toward Lizsharte, the step daughter that she was fixated to when she was a human.

If she wasn't stopped, the hell that would occur after this wouldn't end quickly.

Except if the one in a ten thousand chance of Lux and others defeating the present Sacred Eclipse actually happened.

「Is this your limit, Lux? Are you going to end here——」

Fugil threw his question toward empty air. There wasn't no one to answer him.

The blizzard was gradually strengthening.

「Surrender Krulcifer. It's pointless to fight more than this.」

Lisha who was hovering in the air warned Krulcifer on the ground.

Fafnir that was hit directly by Seven Heads was half destroyed. Now it could only display less than half of its normal performance.

Lisha too couldn't use Over Unit because it was in the middle of repair, but her trump card from Baptism was also still remaining.

「There is no way I'll lose against you..... Against you who don't even notice what you're doing.....」

「What are you saying? Just what are you saying?」

Lisha tilted her head at Krulcifer's gasping words.

「You don't notice? Nom you should have noticed it. If it's you who have received Baptism and fought Lux-kun, you should be able to remember. That the world you're seeing right now is actually false.」

「.....」

Lisha's expression didn't change even after hearing Krulcifer's words.

She was only showing her face that was resolved to accomplish her mission.

「That's pointless, Krulcifer. Uroboros's binding won't be broken with just that much.....」

Mel said that while handling the Pike of Salamander that was worn by Ney Louches.

「Even us is still half in disbelief. It's pointless addressing someone who don't even notice.」

Similarly Greyfer was also speaking bluntly while fighting Lu Calia.

If the perception binding could be dispelled just by talking for a bit, then Lux would do so right from the start.

But, right now Krulcifer was convinced.

「.....False you say?」

Lisha who was hovering in the sky wearing Tiamat heard Krulcifer's voice and frowned slightly.

「Yes, that's right. You just don't want to believe it. That your step mother Queen Raffi is the source of all evil. Also how she is possessed by

Sacred Eclipse, how her heart is used, and also how she assassinated the important people getting in her way behind the scene of that parade——」

「Don't speak nonsense! I won't let you off if you insult Haha-ue even more than that!」

Lisha drew out her Sword Device and took a fighting stance while deploying her Legion once more.

「Insult? No, not saying this is nothing more than insulting you. Princess Lisha. I recognized you as someone worthy to compete against and as a friend. Toward you——」

Hearing that, Lisha's whole body was starting to shake.

Lisha herself didn't understand what Krulcifer was speaking or what was going on.

But, it seemed Lisha body was unconsciously reacting toward the story that was nothing more than a bunch of nonsense for the current Lisha.

「For you, her majesty Queen Raffi is the same like you. That's why you want to save her, you want to share her pain and become stronger. That's why the truth that is happening right now is hard to believe for you. I know that it's a harsh fate. But——」

「.....Shut up!」

Eight Legion attacked to cut off Krulcifer's words.

In respond Krulcifer ascended along with Fafnir and quickly pulled the sniper rifle's trigger.

「It should be a wall that you have to overcome no matter what if you're going to introduce yourself as a princess!」

「Tsu.....!」

A sniping while flying in high speed.

However Lisha naturally also defended by strengthening Tiamat's barrier.

But——, the normal bullet didn't hit Lisha and only grazed before flying to behind her.

(It's missing? Did she mistake her control?)

The next instant after Lisha thought that.

Dou-!

「Wha-.....!?!」

A sharp impact pierced the back wings of Tiamat.

Until now she couldn't see clearly because it was hidden by the shade of tree below but, when she noticed, the face and skin of Krulcifer who was looking up at her had geometrical patterns.

—Full Connect.

Fused state with Drag-Ride that could only be used by Key's Supervisor.

By fusing a part of Drag-Ride and flesh body through nanomachines, it realized even more precise and faster piloting.

The last remaining Auto Shield that wasn't blown away by Seven Heads was positioned behind Lisha without anyone noticing.

「So that's, how it is.....!」

If Krulcifer herself rapidly ascended while readying her sniper rifle, Lisha who was facing her would inevitably had her gaze guided toward her way.

She made her let her guard down toward behind her and intentionally missed her shot so it was bounced by the shield, sniping the back that had thin barrier.

「But, do you get it Krulcifer! The meaning of doing Full Connect with Fafnir that is in that state!」

The flaw of Full Connect wasn't just the great exhaustion mentally. Because the Drag-Knight was connected directly to the armor, the feedback of damage was far heavier than normal.

To say nothing of how the current Fafnir couldn't even produce barrier satisfactorily, and its protective armor was also half destroyed.

In other words, even a light damage would become a great damage and she wouldn't be able to avoid fatal damage if she was hit by a strong attack.

「I'm resolved of that. If I can't win against you without doing this then—」

「Why? Why are you putting yourself at risk until that much! You who came from Ymir Theocracy!」

Lisha who was wearing Tiamat that got the back wings shot and its mobility lowered sent out Legion once more toward Krulcifer.

In respond Krulcifer also dodged them while firing repeatedly with Freezing Cannon. She was reducing the remaining Legion one by one.

Thanks to Full Connect, even the half destroyed Fafnir could accurately read their trajectory and shot them down.

But—the limit was coming in the blink of eye.

White breath was leaking out from Krulcifer's lips due to extreme exhaustion.

「 This isn't for your sake or New Kingdom's sake. You should understand if it's you. If it's you who have the same feeling with me! 」

Her stamina already crossed over the limit.

The remaining time she could wear Fafnir with Full Connect was also only left slightly.

Do or die.

With that resolve, Krulcifer made her last bet.

In order to release Lisha from the perception binding.

「 Hah, that woman.....she is like always. Even though she is normally acting cool, she is passionate at this kind of time ain't she. 」

Seeing Krulcifer exerting her remaining strength, Greyfer who was fighting nearby grinned.

He remembered the time when he fought her one on one in the capital of New Kingdom in the past.

「 Looks like you like to make idle talk aren't you? Even though you aren't a match against me at all. 」

The Automata with mechanical cat ears, Lu Calia made a provocation, but he couldn't object at all.

He couldn't deal against Quetzalcoatl that she was wearing at all.

(This fellow is also really troublesome in her own way. Even after fighting this long, I still can't grasp what her Divine Raiment did even though she should be using it all this time.)

Even when he attacked or defended, he was unable to guess even a portion of the enemy's ability.

He felt like he was fighting a ghost.

Of course Greyfer wasn't just fixated solely to exposing the opponent's Divine Raiment.

But, even when he tried to win by brute force, all his attacks were made to miss without exception.

No—rather than he was made to miss, calling it 『he missed』 would be the correct expression.

And then the closer the distance he fought the enemy, the more striking that fact became.

(I don't get it. What's more, that other damn Automata fighting Mel is also butting in, so it become even harder to understand this fellow's secret.)

Ney Louches that was also fighting near the Shelter would fire Salamander's flame and gave back up at every important juncture.

But, in the end it was only light attack.

The support fire wasn't to the degree that could be called as the two of them fighting together.

However, because the forest was burned even the oxygen at the surrounding was thinned down. Even Greyfer was indirectly getting cornered.

「Please stop resisting alreadyy. All of you originally shouldn't have any reason to fight isn't it. That was why master also left all of you alive.」

「Even if you think there ain't any reason, but I have a reason!」

Greyfer slashed with Tail Blade while spitting out those words.

But, the sword tip shifted slightly from his aim and hit the elbow part of the armored arm.

(As I thought. My attack is missing..... Why!?)

The reason his attack was dodged wasn't due to anything like trajectory control by something like force field or the like that was created by Drag-Ride.

Because if that was the case, then the opponent should be trying to deal with all his attacks.

He still didn't understand the basis of the enemy's strength.

But, these Automata already know about this side's ability.

Not just the ability of the Divine Drag-Ride they were wearing, but also the disposition of the users Mel and Greyfer.

『—Hey, young lady. Can you hear? Are you alright? The flame your opponent send here is getting in my way y'know.』

『.....』

Here Greyfer for the first time sent contact using Dragon Voice to talk to Mel who was fighting in a distance within his sight.

But, Mel didn't show any reaction.

『Oi, can you hear me pipsqueak. Are you dead already?』

『You're annoying, you cock head! Who're you calling pipsqueak huh! I'll punch you flying.』

『What, you're still high spirited huh. Then, reply at me when I called you young lady.』

『Who're you calling young lady. Are you insinuating something? Besides when did you say anything like that? I didn't hear it.』

『—?』

Both sides didn't lose focus on their respective battle even while sending frivolous line to each other.

Greyfer tried talking to Mel because he realized the limit of fighting alone.

—No, rather than saying that he realized, he was feeling a strange discomfort.

(Why can't we win. I got the hunch that the secret to that is in the cooperation of these two Automata.)

For Greyfer who had persisted with the fighting style of a lone wolf until now, it was a method that he didn't really desired but, from fighting together with Lux and other Seven Dragon Paladins, doing joint battle wasn't something that was outside of his capability.

The strong people who were close to him changed him.

And then just now by an accident.

His Dragon Voice communication that didn't reach Mel brought a single hint to Greyfer.

『Oi Mel. It's unusual for you to have this much trouble. Did something happen?』

『Don't make....., useless talk. I'm running out of breath because the air here is thin.....』

『Other than that, your attacks also keep missing ain't it? What's more it happened at every important point. That's why you can't defeat your opponent.』

『.....Be quiet. This time I'll hit without fail, watch me.』

Mel replied like that with a brave front, perhaps she was getting impatient due to her running out stamina.

But, hearing the story from Mel who was in the same position like him, a certain theory was created inside Greyfer.

『Aa, as I thought it's the same with you huh. Let me ask you a bit, how many percent of your attack that missed?』

『I don't want to say.....』



『 This is something important. From your tone a lot of your attacks missed huh.I see, so that's the trick.....』

『What are you saying?』

『 No, I have a request to you. Just once is fine. Try attacking the cat eared Automata fighting me.』

『Haa, haa..... You're only asking unreasonable things, it feels like I'm going to die over here you know?』

Mel was completely running out of breath. She was under the fierce attack of Ney Louches's Salamander.

Her situation was worsening each second without her being able to find any way to breakthrough even now.

『 We'll lose anyway if we don't do anything. You want to return the favor to that Krulcifer right? 』

『I get it.....already!』

Mel nodded and put her last strength into both her hands that were controlling Ddraig Gweiber.

And then the moment her distance with Greyfer became short, she activated her Divine Raiment.

「Dual Shift!」

「 —Her aim isn't me! Lu Calia, be careful dearimasu! Your Drag-Ride's Force Core is targeted.」

Ney Louches who was facing Mel immediately yelled that out.

「-!」

The Divine Raiment's energy that surged from the armor attacked Lu Calia who was fighting in the sky wearing Quetzalcoatl.

Using temperature manipulation the surrounding of the Force Core was made to have high temperature. Mel's aim was to lower the power output using overheating, but for some reason it didn't hit even though she unleashed the attack with a perfect timing.

「 —-, as I thought. How!? Even though I'm tired I was focused when I did that attack!」

Mel whose attack missed even though it was launched from behind Lu Calia yelled.

「No, it's good that it didn't hit. Because of that my attack hit.」

But in that moment, the Tail Blade that Greyfer swung from in front of Lu Calia drew an arc and stabbed the back wings of Quetzalcoatl that she was wearing.

「Hoow?」

The back wings that contained thruster device were destroyed and Quetzalcoatl descended sharply.

「How dare you wounded our pride. It was that kind of trick since the beginning. Your Divine raiment randomly throw Drag-Ride control out of whack isn't it?」

「.....」

Lu Calia didn't reply at Greyfer's remark.

But, it was right on the mark. In exchange, Mel asked from nearby.

「What do you mean by the Drag-Ride's movement becoming random? Is it.....something like malfunction?」

「Something close I think, but that ain't correct. They aimed at when we controlled the Drag-Ride using body control operation and mind control operation, and then they shifted it bit by bit on the whole. That's why the more accurate our aim is, the more they can dodge an attack to their vital spot.」

In order to move Drag-Ride, the pilot used their body part like finger or foot to operate lever or switch. The machine response at that time, the number value inside the system got subtly put out of order.

The Divine Raiment put the Drag-Ride within its range under that influence.

That was the power Quetzalcoatl's Switch LoaderThe Guider .

The Divine Raiment was also used to Mel too so the truth wasn't discovered. It also became a back up for Ney Louches's battle.

The two Automata pretended to attack the Shelter below and fought near each other was because of their objective to fight together secretly from the start.

「Then how did you attack just now hit——」

「That's why, I intentionally attacked to miss while I told you to normally aim at the vital spot.」

Greyfer answered Mel's question cheerfully.

Lu Calia wouldn't use Divine Raiment Switch Loader if the attack wouldn't hit her anyway from the start.

However, it wouldn't be possible to bring her down if he didn't aim to deal a hard blow.

Therefore he told Mel to attack and aimed at the timing when Lu Calia used her Divine Raiment.

「I seee. If it's like this then certainly we won't be able to win without going full power. It's a miscalculation.」

After Greyfer landed his attack on Quetzalcoatl's shoulder, he continued by entangling Tail Blade around her and tore her apart.

The power output of Quetzalcoatl that got hit on its Force Core decreased drastically and it started to free fall.

「Buuut, even if you defeat me, there is still the other one you know」

「I know, that's why you made it so the battle is in this form isn't it?」

In order to break through Lu Calia's defense, Mel showed a big opening to Ney.

「So Lu Calia is defeated.....! Then I'll defeat this girl right away and make the battle one on one dearimasu!」

Although one of them was defeated, Greyfer and Mel already had no stamina remaining.

Ney aimed at the gap of Mel's armor from behind and thrust her pike to kill.

In that instant, Greyfer quickly passed from Mel's front to her back and stood in the way of Ney.

「.....!?」

The tip of Heat Zone that focused the energy into one point possessed the power to deal a sure kill attack against any kind of Drag-Ride.

For a moment Ney Louches wondered if Greyfer planned to die in Mel's place, but a light covered the armor he wore and the flame spear's thrust was easily repelled.

「——This is, Photon Dive!?!」

The Divine Raiment of invincibility that deflected all enemy attack.

Of course it was a known ability for Ney Louches.

But, because Greyfer had never showed it even once in this battle until now, her vigilance was unconsciously slackening without her noticing.

「I deliberately kept it in reserve yeah, just for this chance!」

「.....But, that's all. It's possible to deal with!」

Her vigilance became thin but, if it was the opponent's Divine Raiment then it was always there at the corner of her mind.

It became impossible to defeat Mel here, but she was already at her last leg.

「More importantly, you should be careful too dearimasu. Your stamina is already at the limit after all——」

「.....」

Greyfer fell silent at what Ney pointed out.

That was certainly a fact.

Ney Louches and Lu Calia. The two of them entered this battle with invisible teamwork.

Lu Calia used Quetzalcoatl's Divine Raiment Switch Loader and blocked the attack of the opponents including Mel by randomizing Drag-Ride's control at every important timing. Ney Louches burned the nearby trees with Salamander's flame and decreased the surrounding oxygen to shave the opponents' stamina including Greyfer.

They showed at the surface that their teamwork was minimal while in reality their tactic was to fight as a team.

Besides Greyfer already didn't have the stamina to finish off her.

If she focused on defense like this until the invincibility of Photon Dive ran out she would win——, Ney was convinced of that.

「HAAAAH!」

It was unknown whether Greyfer knew it or not but, he launched fierce attack using Tail Blade.

In respond Ney also squeezed out her last strength and swept away the attack using Heat Zone.

(Excluding Arshalia-sama, I'm the last one of the seven Automata dearimasu..... I cannot lose here in order to show our loyalty!)

The attack of Greyfer that aimed precisely at the Drag-Ride's vital spot was also terrific.

He persistently swung at her from the side, but Ney also didn't lose.

Although the Heat Zone of her Pike was breaking down, she completely held off the attack.

「I win! Photon Dive is also going to run out in a few seconds dearimasu! With this if I go to assist Princess Lisha later——」

She would accomplish the dearest wish of her current master Raffi.

And also the feeling of her master Arshalia that was entrusted to Sacred Eclipse.

It should be like that but.

「You can't see your surrounding eh, as expected from a doll. Do you think you're the only one who can work together secretly?」

「——!?!」

The words of Greyfer who focused on attacking and cornering her to a certain direction until now made Ney showed a confused expression.

「Is protecting that monster really the loyalty of you guys? Is that the wish of your master? You won't be able to see anything if you're bent on just that yeah. After all I also have experienced something like that.」

「What are you, wasting your breath about dearimasu? With your Cuelebre, there is no more way to defeat me——」

「The form of master-servant relationship and the form of teamwork ain't just one y'know? There is master-servant relationship that that is done strictly, and there is also teamwork where one side lend their strength without letting the other notice. You guys are just turning a blind eye to it.」

「——!?!」

Greyfer said that and brandished his Tail Blade once more.

Because the invincibility from Photon Dive was still continuing, Ney reflexively took a defensive stance with her Pike.

But, the slash of Greyfer's Tail Blade that drew a spiraling arc didn't hit Ney and Salamander, but the pile of snow behind them.

Gakin! A high pitched metallic sound resounded from behind.

Right after that, a great explosive impact burst from the center of the sound.

—*DOGUUUN!*

「.....A, gua. Aaa.....!」

The destructive energy that was generated from behind pierced Salamander's armor and pulverized the wearer Ney's body.

The upper body that was broken into two lied on the snow with her face facing up.

「What..... Happened just now dearimasu? Just what.....!」

She was barely able to comprehend that it wasn't an attack that Greyfer himself unleashed.

His only weakness was his inability to display an instantaneous and overwhelming attack power.

Besides, the explosion just now was an attack that couldn't possibly be done using the equipment and Divine Raiment that he had.

The Divine Raiment of invincibility finally vanished from the armor of Greyfer who was looking down on Ney.

「I said it right? We also planned to work together. The explosive that was created by that pipsqueak's special armament was set up in the ground here.」

「.....!」

Ney too immediately noticed after the trick's secret was exposed like that.

The bullet created by Mel's Ddraig Gweiber—Ground Buster was hidden under the snow a slight distance away from the Shelter.

The special armament of Ddraig Gweiber was indiscriminate but displayed amazing power in wide range. Its compatibility was good with the Photon Dive of Greyfer's Cuelebre.

Even if in a situation where he got dragged into the attack, he could endure it using invincibility and dealt damage to enemy one-sidedly.

However, if there was a hint of such tactic in the work, the Automata would naturally be on their guard against it.

「So.....the two of you, also.....secretly, work with each other..... Due to that Black Hero's guidance.」

Ney Louches whose function was about to stop formed her words haltingly.

In respond Greyfer shook his head slightly and replied.

「It's not like it's all thanks to Lux alone. No, that guy himself is also succeeding the vice captain—Singlen's will. All of us received someone else's influence and became stronger. You guys are acting with unshakable will and faith but—. You have completely forgotten about what you obtained from your encounter with the fellows in this era. That's the cause of your defeat.」

「Forget, ting. Is it, dearimasu..... My, memory.....」

Light was gradually vanishing from the eyes of Ney Louches who only had her upper body now.

Due to Raffi who connected with the Center of Avalon, the past memory was poured into Automata. Ney and other Automata lost the memory of the time they spent with Lux and others.

But, she remembered a little bit.

That girl called Krulcifer was also helped by Lux and crawled up from the abyss of despair.

「Even when lost, and defeated, they don't forget, and stand up. Is that the true, strength, of human dearimasu..... Krulcifer-sama, please, stay safe.」

At the snowing grey sky, the dancing figure of the Key's Supervisor girl who talked to her in Ymir Theocracy in the past was reflected on her eyes.

The sublime figure of the master who she trusted was there.

「Haa, haa.....haah!」

A deathly battle was unfolding in the sky above the snowing Ancient Forest.

Krulcifer whose Drag-Ride was half destroyed was making full use of future prediction and formed method of attack and defense with a single sniper rifle.

She wrung out her remaining strength and held Lisha back with Sharp ShootingPrecise Firing .

On the other hand Lisha also used Suppressor and Legion to corner Krulcifer and decided the battle.

When Krulcifer dodged the gravity field, she struck with Legion and saved her armor.

At the same time she paid great attention to the counterattack from her and dodged.

Because she couldn't completely dodge the sniping using future prediction, she focused on not getting hit by fatal damage and continued a battle that was at the very limit.

The two Automata—Ney Louches and Lu Calia were defeated by Greyfer and Mel.

However, the two Seven Dragon Paladins who won just barely were wounded all over.

They were unable to even wear their armor anymore. The communication from Airi's Drake told her that they evacuated to Shelter.

And then—now.

Krulcifer who was partially fused with Fafnir using Full Connect was in the middle of deathly battle with Lisha.

If she didn't defeat Lisha here and made her returned to her sense, it would be the defeat of all of them at Lux's side.

(But, this is already the limit huh..... Full Connect won't hold for even one more minute.)

Lisha was activating the power of Baptism that was burning the energy she stockpiled.

The power of Baptism that Krulcifer obtained was in order for her to fuse with Drag-Ride with even more effectiveness, but she already received too much damage to display that ability.

Most of all, she was pushed back by the hidden strength of Lisha who resolved to protect Raffi and the New Kingdom.

Everyone along with Greyfer and Mel who evacuated into the Shelter were watching the progress of the battle in suspense.

No matter how anyone looked at it, it was clear that the probability of Krulcifer losing was greater.

And then, Lux who was recovering in the adjacent treatment room was also watching that battle, but for some reason his fighting spirit wouldn't well up.

Even though he had to protect Krulcifer, protect everyone.

Even though he understood it logically, his body wouldn't move.

(Why? Even though the situation is like this, I—)

He racked his brain inside the dark room, but the answer wouldn't come out.

「Lu-chan. I'm coming in.」

But, the girl with the deepest relationship with Lux entered inside the room.

「.....」

‘It's unusual.’

Lux thought.

Because Lux thought that Philuffy wasn't the type of person who would scold Lux even at this kind of time.

(Wait, just what am I saying..... A man who don't fully understand even about himself right now is—)

Lux was staying inside the treatment mechanical pod wearing his pilot suit. He was staying quiet.

The silver wall in front of his eyes were projecting the fight of Lisha and Krulcifer but, he couldn't move.

「Thank you, for before. You saved me.」

「.....」

Philuffy sported a small smile on her mouth and said that with her usual tone that was on her own pace.

She didn't come to send out Lux to fight.

But, even so Lux couldn't say anything back.

「Lisha-sama. She is still fighting. Surely she is desperate, in order to protect what's important to her.」

「.....Phi-chan. I——」

The weakness that was born inside him.

For some reason he couldn't use the power of Baptism that he should have obtained and he was unable to stop Lisha. When he tried to say that, his thought came to a stop.

There was no way Lux challenged the New Kingdom with such weak and naïve thinking.

He led Alma and Aeryl, Airi, and then the Seven Dragon Paladins and now even everyone of the New Kingdom and got into battle like this.

And then right now he also heard that Raffi too was going to start rampaging as Sacred Eclipse.

In that sense, Lux's decision to try defeating Raffi without anyone knowing wasn't wrong.

Lux would take the blame by himself and then it would become peace.

That was the best choice.

In fact it was going well.

And yet——why was he unable to stop Lisha?

Was he feeling hesitation to discard her feeling and broke her parent-daughter relationship with Queen Raffi?

『It's pointless you know, Lux. Someone who doesn't have the resolve to make use of 『evil』 with their own will, someone who cannot sacrifice anyone, it will be meaningless for them no matter how much strength they have. You are, the weakest.』

In that case—as expected it was just like Fugil said.

No matter how strong and skilled he became, he didn't have the caliber to use that.

He had no qualification.

As expected he was, the weakest Drag-Knight.

「It's impossible, for me..... Something like saving the country, with own strength. In the end, I couldn't even, use that power.」

Exactly because she was the childhood friend who he trusted more than anyone.

Lux expressed his true feeling to her who knew of Lux's weakness.

Seeing his figure—Philuffy wasn't angry.

She wasn't sad.

She also showed no sign of exasperation or disappointment.

She just got closer beside Lux who was inside the mechanical pod and stared.

To the fight on the surface that was projected on the silver wall.

To Krulcifer who was mustering a desperate effort to talk to Lisha.

And then, she whispered.

「The reason Lu-chan couldn't fight. Why you couldn't get serious when facing the princess, somehow, I understand.」

「.....That's, because I'm weak.」

Because he couldn't control his heart and unelashed the power of Baptism.

Lux words came from that thought. But Philuffy denied it.

「That's not it, Lu-chan.」

Philuffy made a small smile on her lips and whispered beside him.

「That's because you don't notice. Of your true feeling. That's why, if you don't face it.」

「That, what do you mean——」

「You'll understand, if you look.」

Lured by Philuffy, Lux also stared at the screen on the silver wall.

The figure of Krulcifer mustering her remaining strength to bet on the last attack was projected there.

「——Wise Blood – Accel」

Fafnir that was partially fused with Krulcifer emitted dazzling light of Divine Raiment.

At the same time, future prediction that showed the way to her victory was projected on Krulcifer's own eyes.

But, Lisha wasn't perturbed even seeing the Divine raiment of certain kill.

「It won't even become a bluff in that situation! I know all your hands! ——Suppressor!」

Lisha pulled out her Sword Device and yelled. At the same time she also activated Tiamat's Divine Raiment.

The same like before, random gravity field was formed at the surrounding area by Suppresso to throw Krulcifer's calculation out of order.

(I know you will come like that.....!)

Wise Blood Accel that could be used in Full Connect mode was a powerful Divine Raiment without equal, but it wasn't like it altered fate.

It wasn't a future prediction that depended on the opponent's action, it only read the pattern to victory with her possible action included with very high precision.

Therefore, if the opponent was strong and Krulcifer had no spare strength, the attack options were limited.

Occasionally it also wouldn't be able to deduce the future that led to victory.

Because of that Lisha judged that it wasn't a threat in this situation.

She would move to decide the battle at last in order to not give time for the Drag-Knights inside the Shelter to recover.

(I'm in overwhelming disadvantage. On the contrary she can already see the flow to victory.)

But because of that there was an opening.

She was already unable to make use of Fafnir's spec to display speed that even the eye couldn't follow.

Even Sharp Shooting was lacking in power to finish off Tiamat.

Even so, there was a chance of victory.

Krulcifer weaved through the wave of gravity field while dodging Legion's attack and flew around Lisha.

The random gravity field that even Lisha herself couldn't fully grasp was analyzed by Wise Blood Accel and deduced the route to clear it.

「—Lux-kun, I wonder if you're listening. I wonder if you're cheering me on? I swear I'll stop her. I swear I'll return that girl to her real self without fail. I swear I'll free her from her false perception!」

「My real self? The strange one here is all of you! Why do you betray the New Kingdom!? Why are you targeting Haha-ue!?!」

「You're, a weak person aren't you? I can't entrust Lux-kun to someone like that.」

「—!? Enough with the nonsense!」

Krulcifer circled around with Lisha at the center. She repelled Legion with her sniping while aiming at Lisha.

But Lisha too was moving with small and quick movements. She was escaping from the sniping line that Fafnir's sniper rifle was aiming at.

It was a long range sniping battle where she poured all her remaining strength into it.

She understood that she wouldn't be able to keep it up for a minute.

She dodged the attacks of Tiamat, Legion that approached from above, below, left, and right while seeing through the wide range gravity force from Suppressor using Wise Blood while attacking.

But, she couldn't dodge everything.

With the performance of half destroyed Fafnir, she was being pushed back Lisha's Tiamat even with her using Full Connect.

Bit by bit, her remaining barrier and armor were shaved, and the feedback from it made the damage burdening her to be heavier.

Even when she was placed on such predicament, Krulcifer didn't stop talking to Lisha.

On the other hand Lisha was seized with the frustration of not being able to decide the battle even with the advantage she had built and by a strange uneasiness.

The binding of perception revision.

The sight that was different from the reality that Lisha wished for was creating an out of place feeling.

In a corner of her mind, another Lisha was asking herself.

『Your step mother is—a monster.』

—Wrong.

『She despaired from the terror that her sin of selling out her own brother would be exposed. She summoned Sacred Eclipse to her and got possessed. She changed into monster. And then she dirtied her hand with sin and schemed to rule this country.』

—Wrong.

『There is no more way to save mother. She can't be saved by your or by anyone else. You can only kill her before she start rampaging.』

—Wrong.

『Everyone wish for that. You should fulfill your duty as a princess! You have no ally at all. There won't be anyone who saves you and your step mother. Even your knight is your enemy!』

「—Wrong!」

Lisha lifted up her Sword Device as though to shake off her own voice that she was starting to hear inside her head.

She dispelled the Suppressor that was covering a wide area and this time she focused the energy into the main cannon Seven Heads.

「——!? That's!」

Krulcifer who was fighting to the utmost limit until now held her breath seeing Lisha's stance.

The gravity sphere of Suppressor that she used when defeating Hayes in the past.

It would suck the person who touched it and compressed them inside. It was Lisha's greatest sure kill technique.

Krulcifer sensed it the moment Wise Blood that she was using consecutively ran out of time.

There was no chance to defeat Lisha except in this moment.

(If I fail, I will die for sure this time. —Even so, I can only do it!)

Krulcifer suppressed her exhaustion and pain and flew toward Lisha.

She charged for the last offense and defense.

「Krulcifer-san, that's reckless.....!」

Lux got out of the pod. He dragged his heavy body and grabbed his Sword Device.

The repair of Bahamut so it could activate at minimum had been finished.

But, for some reason Philuffy at his side stopped his hand.

「Phi-chan!? Why are you stopping me? If I don't quickly go, Krulcifer-san will! Right now I'm the only one who can wear Drag-Ride!」

「That Sword Device, it doesn't react. Your feeling still hasn't caught up. That's why, don't move.」

The silent Philuffy unusually talked with more words count to persuade Lux.

Just as she said, the Drag-Ride didn't react even when he pushed the switch on the handle.

(Even though my stamina should have recovered, why—)

This meant that he was unable to do the mind control operation.

Not only he was unable to release the power that he obtained from Baptism, he was unable to even summon his Drag-Ride?

Just what in the world was going on with his body?

「Lu-chan, you don't want to fight. That's why, the Drag-Ride won't move. Not noticing that feeling is no good. Not for anyone else, but for none other than Lu-chan yourself.」

「——!？」

Lux gasped hearing Philuffy's words.

「That's why, be honest. If you don't convey your feeling, it's no good.」



Powerful light was residing in the eyes of his childhood friend.

「My, feeling..... In regard to this battle——」

Why did he become unable to fight? Right now, what did he need to do first?

Lux stared at the battle that was projected on the silver wall while grasping his Sword Device tightly.

「——Weak you say!? This me!?!」

「Yes, you're weak. You're only averting your eyes from reality..... You avert your eyes from your step mother her majesty Queen Raffi and escape into dream even now.」

Lisha hovered in the air. She swung her Sword Device and moved the Legion with high speed like storm.

On the other hand Krulcifer focused only on dodging and shot down the projectile weapons one by one.

「Who are you calling running away!? I'll never abandon Haha-ue!」

「Wrong. No matter how painful it is, you should look straight at reality. If you don't do that, you won't be able to walk forward! This world is going to end!」

Krulcifer was gradually closing in.

She used her last remaining Auto Shield for reflection shot while landing a normal bullet on Tiamat's arm.

「Tsu.....!?!」

With a jerk the center of gravity of the frame tilted. Lisha's attention was slightly diverted to correct her balance.

Krulcifer mustered her remaining strength and activated Wise Blood.

Right after that, Krulcifer aimed at Lisha and sniped her using future prediction—or that should be the case.

「Wha-.....!」

She should be aiming at the back wings of Tiamat using the Auto Shield that she placed behind Lisha and Tiamat in order to bounce the bullet but, that bullet veered off course.

When she observed the gravity sphere that was unleashed from the muzzle of Seven Heads was bending the scenery that Krulcifer was seeing.

It twisted even the surrounding space and made Krulcifer's attack missed.

「——! I, don't abandon Haha-ue! Leave, Krulcifer!」

Lisha yelled while shedding tears.

If the gravity sphere that was fired to below continued as it was then it would also graze Shelter that was underground and destroyed it.

But Krulcifer didn't dodge the gravity sphere and spread open both her hands to stand in the way.

In order to soften the impact to Shelter even for just a bit, she stood in the way along with her barrier that was only barely remaining.

「Well done. This is your win——. Just for this time only.」

「Krulcifer.....!?!」

Lisha who was the one firing the sure kill bombardment opened wide in shock.

The purple gravity sphere was falling slowly. The moment there was only several seconds left until it hit——.

The surrounding was enveloped in illusion as though time had stopped.

「——Reload on Fire!」

No.

The time didn't stop.

The surrounding was just enveloped in a very slow flow of time that was dozens of time slower than normal.

Lisha and Tiamat hovered in the sky above Shelter.

And then, only the gravity sphere fired from Tiamat was stopping.

「——This is!?!」

Lisha saw it inside the world where even thought was halted.

The figure that she perceived as someone similar with Lux until now was clearly visible right now.

—The Black Hero.

The hero who indirectly saved Lisha seven years ago, and the young man who she trusted the most.

Lux Arcadia, appeared in front of her.

「I'm sorry that I made you worry, Krulcifer-san.」

「.....I'm not worried or anything. I knew you will come for me.」

Krulcifer who reached her limit from the exhaustion of using Full Connect continuously and lost her armor was held in the arms of Lux midair.

Without pause he quickly flew to the side and got away from the attraction of the gravity sphere.

「Did you see me coming using Fafnir's future prediction Divine Raiment?」

「No.」

Krulcifer smiled with an ephemeral expression at Lux's question.

「I believed, that if it's you then you will surely come.」

「.....」

When Lux returned a serious gaze to her, Krulcifer ran out of strength.

Her eyes were slowly closing and her body turned limp. During that time her mouth formed words weakly.

「So you have noticed.....your feeling. Then, convey it to her. If it's you—you can do it.」

「—Yes.」

Krulcifer too had recovered her lost memory of the three days of parade.

In that case, she should have also remembered how she and Lux became lover.

She knew why Lux was suffering.

She fought in order to make him noticed it.

「.....Thank you, Krulcifer-san.」

Right after Lux nodded back, the gravity sphere that was super decelerated by Reload on Fire fastened instead with a speed that was dozens of times faster.

Everyone had evacuated from Shelter earlier but. Suppressor's gravity sphere fell like meteor and destroyed the facility apart.

「.....-! What, power!」

Airi who evacuated from Shelter yelled in shock from some distance away.

Lisha who was burning her energy using the power of Baptism was still preserving her stamina.

「Nii-san—be careful! Lisha-sama right now is.....」

「Yeah, I understand.」

Lux landed on the ground for a moment and handed the exhausted Krulcifer to Airi.

And then, Lux flew in a straight line toward Lisha who was hovering in the sky with the Seven Heads aimed at him.

At present Lisha was the greatest enemy.

Lux accepted that fact and he was convinced of victory even then.

The new power of Baptism that he obtained from surgery in coffin. He focused his mind in order to display it.

(—Why? Why is Lux here? Why is that guy, standing in my way!?)

The consciousness of Lisha who was aiming for Azure Division's annihilation was falling into a dark abyss.

She already understood that it was Lux in front of her.

But, her heart didn't accept that.

(I promised with Haha-ue, and with Lux. That we will protect the New Kingdom.....!)

They swore that.

And yet, when she noticed everyone was turning into her enemy.

They were aiming to destroy the New Kingdom, to defeat Queen Raffi.

Even the members of Syvalles who should be her ally, even the Seven Dragon Paladins—.

(I won't, abandon Haha-ue.....absolutely not!)

Seven years ago, her small self was powerless.

It wasn't anyone's fault. It was because of fate that she was captured by Old Empire army and her father abandoned her.

She didn't have anyone to rely on.

There wasn't anyone who saved her.

Raffi who was in the same environment like Lisha confessed her sin to her.

In the past, she was deceived by Waybra, a spy that was sent by Old Empire. In order to protect him, she told him the location of her big brother Count Atismata.

She was the criminal who betrayed her brother and killed the great hero who established the revolution.

She was tormented by that sin and felt scared. Even so she fought until now in order to protect the New Kingdom.

(I too, I too am the same.....!)

As the proof of her betrayal to her father, the brand of Old Kingdom was pressed on her stomach.

The suffering of having no choice but to choose that path in order to survive, the suffering of being toyed by fate and having no choice but to live as a royalty, Lisha understood it better than anyone.

(If I abandon her, Haha-ue—what will become of her? There is no one. There isn't anyone who will support her! That's why!)

The white breath she exhaled smoldered like smoke.

Her body was hot like it was burning.

The ability she obtained from Baptism.

With the power to burn the energy she stockpiled all at once, the current Lisha was maintaining her state of full power.

Lisha controlled Tiamat fully to express everything, all her passion and will.

She unleashed her strength toward the 『enemy』 approaching her.

「I won't lose! I will, protect the New Kingdom Haha-ue created!」

The remaining eight Legion that became even more damaged from the fight against Krulcifer attacked the flying Lux.

「.....!?!」

But, the moment Lux immediately tried to guard with his great sword, those projectile weapons veered away by itself and scattered.

「.....That, don't tell me!?!」

「Yes. It intentionally, missed.」

Celis and Philuffy who were standing below watched the fight in the sky and muttered.

No matter how powerful someone was, if the first move was taken away and they were attacked then they would raise their guard.

If the attacker tried to land a hit, there was a possibility that the attack would be hit back instead using the sword.

If it was Lisha who could use advanced technique like Hide Shot, then she should know this fact even better.

Thus, Legion was sent out only to make Lux's movement stiffened for an instant.

In order to buy time until Lisha fired the bombardment of gravity sphere once more.

「——Don't stop!」

「Onii-chan, hurry!」

Greyfer and Mel guessed Lisha's tactic and yelled.

Their voices pushed Lux's back. He ascended toward Lisha.

If the gravity sphere was fired in extremely close range, even if he decelerated the time he would still get dragged close and crushed by that super dense force field.

Having said that, he had no choice of avoiding this situation.

The eight Legion that missed Lux just now were already approaching from behind Bahamut to surround him.

「So from the start, they were fired so Lux-kun won't get away.....!」

Sharis who was looking up at the two's fight from the ground murmured in admiration.

The attack disordered and stopped Lux's movement, at the same time the intention of making it harder for the opponent to dodge the next attack was also included in it.

「Yes. Lisha-sama is also seriously trying to defeat Lux-san——」

The quiet Noct saw the situation and let those words slipped out. Tillfur beside her was also shaking in anxiety.

「Will the two of them, really get out of this safely? This——!」

The Triad was still under the binding of Uroboros's world revision.

They only sided with Azure Division while being half in doubt due to the persuasion of a lot of their comrades.

Exactly because of that their anxiousness was also great.

「Eat this! You damn destroyer of New Kingdom's peace!」

Lisha who caught Lux in her firing range fixed the aim of Seven Heads.

In addition Legion were attacking from behind Lux's Bahamut with each of them coming from a different direction.

It was already impossible to simply dodge all the attack even if Reload on Fire was activated.

『——Lisha-sama. Please listen.』

But——in that, instant.

In that cornered situation, Lux sent a message to Lisha using Dragon Voice.

『I, have to apologize to you.』

The time that was even less than several seconds felt like eternity for some reason for both of them.

「.....-!? You want to apologize now, don't screw around! What're you saying after you try to push the New Kingdom into chaos!?!」

Lisha used anger to paint over her heart that was shaken by Lux's familiar voice.

She denied logic with emotion.

There was no way that this man in front of him was really Lux.

Because if in the worst case that he was actually Lux.

Because if the young man who she trusted was trying to defeat her mother.

Then the ideal that Lisha wished for, would never come to pass.

The path of protecting the New Kingdom with Lux, and Raffi, and then her, the three of them together, would be gone completely—.

『I was, scared. Since when I started this battle. I kept thinking, what would happen if Lisha-sama learn the truth. If I tell you the path that I should walk, how will you think of me then. It was scary, it was really hopelessly scary.』

「—!？」

Lux said those words while sweeping away all eight Legion approaching him from behind with a single stroke of his great sword.

Seeing that outrageous skill that was done without even turning around or glancing back, Lisha and also everyone watching the fight from below opened their eyes wide in shock.

That wasn't Lux that Lisha knew until now.

He used special armament Linker Pulse to control the trajectory of Legion approaching from behind and dragged them to one place, at the same time he unleashed a slash with Quick Draw.

「You.....what in the world?」

If it was Lux from before, while he was using his secret technique, his concentration would be partially taken by it and he couldn't use it at the same time with other special armament.

But, Lux right now was using tuning. He inputted the control of Linker Pulse beforehand and made it got carried out.

Because of that, even while he was concentrating with the control of Quick Draw, he was able to use Linker Pulse at the same time.

But, is a calculation that complicated something that can be done.....?
In just an instant like that]

That was Lux's strength that Lisha didn't know until now.

「The truth is, I was scared all this time. Telling you the truth that her majesty Queen Raffi is possessed by Sacred Eclipse, was scary.」

Lux who closed the distance didn't speak through Dragon Voice anymore but with his voice.

The Baptism that was applied to Lux's body was the compression strengthening of his thinking speed and concentration.

His greatest strong point, making use of his discernment to read the opponent's movement and chose the best method to attack.

He gave order to Bahamut by inputting order through tuning beforehand while pouring even more focus to execute his secret technique.

With this, it became possible for him to use his secret technique, and perhaps his special armament too at the same time.

He couldn't use it for a long period of time just like the other girls but—.

Although he wasn't at the same level with Fugil, but he was approaching the territory of Singlen who was at full power.

「Tsu.....!? Shut up! Are you trying to trick me!? You aren't Lux at—!」

Even so Lisha denied the reality.

She opposed the voice trying to trick her and mustered her remaining strength.

「—HAAAAAAH.....!」

She liberated the energy of Divine Raiment that was focused on Seven Heads and fired the huge gravity sphere toward Lux.

But, at the same time.

No, even more slightly earlier than that, Lux released his Divine Raiment that had its power output strengthened with tuning.

「—Reload on Fire」

「Wha-!?!」

Lisha's sure kill technique—the gravity sphere that was fired from Seven heads. The only way to be saved from it once it had been fired was only by dodging.

In other words at close range it was provided with the capability of offense and defense in one package, but Lux accelerated further and flew toward the center of the gravity sphere.

And then, just like that he passed through the force field of dreadful gravity attraction.

「——」

Zuga-!

Right after Lisha grasped the situation and gasped, Lux stabbed the shoulder of Tiamat with the tip of his great sword.

Lisha reflexively twisted her body and dodged direct hit. But without pause he flew while pushing her back.

「That, what in the world——」

「How, did Lux-san pass through that force field of super gravity?」

Airi and Noct who were watching the fight from below murmured in a daze.

Rosa and Soffice beside them grasped the situation and answered their question.

「In that instant, he activated Reload on Fire you know..... With the first half of the compression strengthening, he sharply decreased the surrounding gravity until a mere fraction, and then he slipped through the gravity sphere in that opening.」

Lux's strengthening of his thinking speed made it possible for him to execute control that surpassed human intellect that couldn't be imitated by other Drag-Knight.

「And then, in that situation, it's already Lux's win.」

Celis who was looking up at the fight added.

Tiamat was a Divine Drag-Ride that was specialized for long range battle.

When the battle was brought into close quarter combat when the fighters stuck close to each other, it was placed in an overwhelmingly disadvantageous position.

And when the opponent was Lux, then it was all the more true.

But,

「——No, not yet. Do you....., forget, Celis-senpai? The hidden strength of that girl.」

「.....!?!」

Krulcifer who woke up without anyone noticing pointed out. Celis gasped at that.

In the next moment, Lux and Lisha were falling toward the snowy ground with a speed that eye couldn't follow while still sticking close to each other.

DOON!

A tremendous impact shook the ground. Lux and Lisha with their Divine Drag-Ride glued to each other were inside a powerful gravity field.

「That.....don't tell me!」

Airi who saw that muttered with a shiver.

The self-destruct technique that Lisha also showed in the past in the mock battle against Celis.

In a state where she was glued with the opponent's Drag-Ride, she activated Suppressor to affect the opponent along with herself.

「——This is bad! At this rate the two of them will die!」

Aeril who sensed the abnormality yelled in grief, but everyone there was wounded all over. There wasn't anyone that had recovered to be able to wear Drag-Ride.

Even if there was someone who could, everyone realized that they wouldn't make it in time before the fight was settled.

「Uh..... Guu.....!」

The purple gravity field mowed down the surrounding trees and made the ground to sink.

Lisha who kept firing gravity sphere that was filled with Tiamat's full strength shouldn't be able to return right away to a state where she could use her Divine Raiment.

It would be the same even if she used the energy burning ability from her Baptism.

However, Lisha's tenacity toward the New Kingdom made this last attack possible.

The gravity field in this glued state could only exert a slight gravity burden, but she made use of Reload on Fire's effect instead and executed

this most powerful attack.

So to speak, this was the compression strengthening that Lux used to slip through the first gravity sphere.

The first five seconds had passed, and now the latter five seconds were in the work.

Because the effect of gravity was amplified by dozens of times, even the effect of Suppressor that was mostly nonexistence became dozens of times greater.

Both sides were putting up barrier and took defensive stance, even so they couldn't endure it.

The armor and frame of the Drag-Rides were creaking and distorting.

「Lisha....., sama」

「I won't lose! I swore to Haha-ue, and my knight.....!」

Lisha continued using her Divine Raiment with a pained expression that looked like she would break crying even now.

If Lux kept holding on like this, then she would surely continue using it until she died.

(Aa—)

In the corner of his mind, Lux once again thought of what he understood.

He, didn't want to see Lisha sad.

Lux found hope from she who conquered her harsh and painful past, didn't lose against the heavy burden of a princess, and tried to live strongly looking forward.

Unlike Lux who despaired and he who was a prince ended up destroying the Old Empire, if it was Lisha then she would surely led the New Kingdom correctly.

「I was—happy. Being able to stay at your side, being able to aim at a new noble path by working under you who would accept me.....」

「What are, you saying..... I won't—get tricked. I won't be swayed by the sweet words of the like of you!」

Inside the powerful gravity field, in a situation where two Drag-Rides were wrestling, Lisha opposed even Lux's words.

「That was why, I avoided you. I was scared to thrust reality in front of you. I was scared to make you suffer, to get hated by you.」

Even so, Lux didn't stop whispering.

The reason he couldn't display his full strength until now, it lied in the fact that Krulcifer made him noticed.

No matter how much he stifled his heart using the correct logic, he couldn't trick his true feeling.

That was why, he couldn't display his strength from Baptism.

It was none other than Lux who was scared to tell Lisha the truth and ran away.

「But, I have to say it. Your step mother, is possessed by Sacred Eclipse. She was taken over completely. If her majesty isn't defeated, this world will perish.」

「Such, thing..... There's no way that's true! Protecting Haha-ue, that's what I——!」

She strengthened the gravity field's power using Suppressor to oppose Lux's persuasion.

The amplification effect of Reload on Fire's latter half was already running out.

But, Lisha herself poured all her energy into the Divine Raiment and didn't let Lux get away.

She continued activating her ability with the resolve of dying herself at this rate.

Creak creak Not just the armor, even the bones of their flesh body that was protected by their respective Drag-Ride were creaking.

「Nii-san! Please get away! At this rate——!」

The voice of Airi who saw that sight reached them.

It would be possible if Reload on Fire was activated once more and the influence of the gravity was lightened, but Lux didn't run away.

「Please fight together with me, Lisha-sama. It'll be no good if you aren't with me. I finally realized that.」

「——」

In exchange of running away from the gravity field that was also hurting the girl herself, Lux reached out with his own hands and hugged Lisha's head.

He lightened the gravity field with Bahamut's barrier to protect her from pain.

「Because you were there for me, because you were watching me, I could fight. I could be strong. That's why, please fight as the princess of the New Kingdom. From here on, no matter how painful it is, I will support you at your side forever, I will become your strength, that's why——」

「.....-!?!」

Lux's voice was transmitted to Lisha's heart.

Lux knew that until now his strength was something born from his involvement with the girls.

Even if he severed his connection with them, he believed that he would be able to fight alone.

——But, the truth was different.

It was because Lisha and others were there for him, that he was able to fight and be strong.

He obtained bond with those girls who needed him.

He was also encouraged by his Drag-Ride that was remade by Lisha with much effort.

Compared to when he was in solitude as a prince of Old Empire, now he was able to obtain a lot of important comrades.

Because of that he was able to become far, far stronger.

(——I was weak, because I couldn't recognize my own weakness. Because I didn't have the courage to confide to them my true feeling, the courage to ask them to understand me.)

That was why, he had to convey it.

Of Lux's own feeling, and wish toward Lisha.

「I, am.....」

The power of Suppressor that Lisha unleashed to crush herself together too as though to punish herself, it was softened by the man in front of her who was her enemy who became her shield.

The feeling of guilt of being unable to save her step mother.

That pain, this man was trying to share it, to understand it, to protect her from it even if just for a bit.

(This guy..... Is he, not an enemy? Why, why is he doing something like this—)

A doubt was born inside Lisha.

He should be an enemy that tried to destroy the New Kingdom and defeated her stepmother, but then why was he trying to protect Lisha's heart?

The binding of perception by Uroboros, the chain restraining her heart was breaking.

The mist covering her heart was clearing up. He perceived the young man in front of him.

The young man kept embracing Lisha's body. He endured the agony from the gravity field while smiling kindly to reassure the girl.

「—Lisha-sama. I love you.」

And then Lux conveyed the feeling from the bottom of his heart to her.

Kiin, at that moment.

Something burst inside Lisha's chest and her eyes were opened.

「Lu, x.....?」

Lisha knew.

About this young man who was always protecting her.

About the young man who knew about her sad past and continued to save her by staking his life.

「—Lux-!」

The binding of perception vanished, at the same time the gravity field of Suppressor disappeared.

At the same time, the armor of Tiamat that Lisha was wearing was dispelled. Then Lux fell down on that spot too.

Lisha crouched and lifted up the falling Lux.

The tears moistening her crimson eyes trickled along her cheek and fell on the snow.

Lisha noticed that what she had seen until now was something different.

The kind queen who was protecting her wasn't there. She was already changed into a monster who devoured and absorbed human's malice and hatred.

There was already nothing that could be done to save her expect defeating her who had become the strongest humanoid Ragnarok.

「I..... Swore it. That I will protect the New Kingdom, together with Haha-ue.....」

「I, know. But——」

「You don't need, to say it. I know. At this rate, the New Kingdom will perish. What Haha-ue tried to protect desperately even while suffering will——」

Lux gently embraced Lisha's shaking shoulders.

His body was exhausted and hurt from the damage caused by the gravity pressure, even so Lux lent Lisha his chest in order to accept Lisha's sadness.

「I, as a princess, as that person's daughter, I have to stop her. I know, that.....」

「——」

Gyut, Lux put strength into his arms that were embracing the sobbing Lisha.

He knew that he wouldn't be able to heal the pain of her wound no matter what he said.

Even so, he hugged her in order to tell her that there was someone shouldering the same pain beside her.

With the commander of New Kingdom army Lisha awakened to the truth, the war between Azure Division and New Kingdom army came to an actual end in this place.

GOOooOOO, the groan of a strange creature was echoing through the grey sky.

Raffi who was devouring and absorbing all energy had completely lost herself.

Sacred Eclipse that unified the will of the people, their mind made a single conclusion.

Directed this world to destruction and reset everything.

That was the conclusion that was reached by human about human society.

In order to negate the conclusion that fellow humans were plundering from their fellow human with authority and violence, Sacred Eclipse started moving in order to take away power from humans.

Fugil who was watching over that activation slowly got to his feet.

「With this—Raffi lost her qualification as a vessel of king.」

The last remaining Automata Arhslia murmured emotionlessly.

「No, not yet. That person's will, her ego hasn't completely fallen apart.」

Fugil muttered while looking at Raffi with her young girl appearance scattering muddy black miasma.

As though to prove his words, a mysterious smile formed on Raffi's expression.

「—Lux Arcadia. So you defeated my daughter. Then, I shall take her back. In this land where the king of this era will be decided, at this stage where the Center is sleeping.」

She understood the situation of Lux and others that were several kl away from here. She was waiting for them.

In order to introduce herself as the true king, in order to connect with this Center, she wouldn't let them go past this place.

Her mind was polluted by the emotion of the humans that she absorbed as Sacred Eclipse, even so she held on only to her last remaining awareness.

For the sake of her wish with Lisha, to guide the New Kingdom to become an ideal country.

「.....I see, the battle is still not over yet.」

Fugil nodded wordlessly at the words of Automata Arshalia.

Their promise with Raffi was already accomplished by the Automatas.

The crystal that was brought here. Grand Force had been recovered back. It was handed to Fugil and he would be sent out to set it inside the Garden in activated state.

With that the Ruins would resonance once more, and through that the activation of Uroboros's world revision—Endless would become possible.

It was arranged that fugil would carry out the world revision once more with the defeat of Lux's side.

Raffi knew that Lux and others would come to here where the Center was sleeping in order to stop that.

She was waiting for her daughter and arch-enemy.

「Then let's go. In order to return everything to the beginning, in order to ascertain the possibility that human build.」

「Yes..... I will watch this place. Fugil, be careful.」

Arshalia saw Fugil off. Fugil used Uroboros's special armament—Infinity that could create the form of all Drag-Rides to make Bahamut and flew in it toward the Garden.

It would take around five or six hours until Fugil returned.

During that time the winner would be decided.

Would it be Lux, or would it be Queen Raffi.

In this land, it would be decided who between the people with the qualification of King would be qualified to shoulder the next era.

「It looks like Fugil-niisan is starting to travel to somewhere. There was a reaction in the radar.」

Airi who finally could deploy her Drake after taking a rest muttered with a conflicted expression.

Several bonfires were making crackling sound, softening the coldness of the freezing air.

Lux and Lisha, and everyone gathered here took out the remaining beds and sheets, and preserved food, water, and other goods out of the destroyed shelter, then they took a rest and applied first aid.

「I don't think that it's the case but, don't tell me he is heading to the capital? What is he planning to do?」

Tillfur spoke with a worried voice, but Aeryl shook her head slightly.

「Most likely, he went to set the Grand Force in the Garden, in order to prepare for the execution of world revision by Uroboros once more. I think he isn't going to do something to the New Kingdom itself.」

Hearing those words, all present breathed in relieve, however they showed an uneasy expression.

「But, isn't that bad? Uroboros will rewrite our perception again right?」

Noct also nodded at what Sharis pointed out but,

「Yes. However, we have no way to stop it. It might not be the case against any other opponent, but to stop that Fugil, even if all of us are in a perfect condition——」

「.....」

The Syvalles members there, the Seven Dragon Paladins, even Lux and Lisha couldn't say anything.

That fact described the situation frankly.

「I'm sorry. Everyone, you all got troubled because of my fault.」

「Let's not say such thing to each other anymore. I was the one at fault for this.」

Lisha who recovered the correct perception faced everyone and bowed her head, then Lux immediately gave her a follow up.

After the binding of perception by Uroboros was broken, it became possible to fight together with Lisha.

「No, I have the responsibility as a princess. I faintly suspected Hahaue's change, however I couldn't realize it. I was disqualified as a princess.」

「No, such thing is——」

Lux reflexively tried to cover up for Lisha but,

「Both of you, the situation was like that before this so I'll tolerate it but, can I ask you two to not flirt too much? A danger is approaching the world you know?」

Krulcifer who was being nursed by Mel and lying down on the ground was looking exasperated while cutting in. Lisha's face was boiled red hearing that.

Anger and shame.

However if pushed to say, then it looked like the latter's percentage was bigger.

「Don't make fun of me Krulcifer! I'm seriously——」

Less than half of them were watching that atmosphere warmly, while more than half were watching with a conflicted thought.

Yoruka wasn't in this place but, those like Krulcifer, Philuffy, and Celis got into a relationship of whispering love to each other with Lux in the middle of that looping parade.

Even the super insensitive Lux was somehow sensing that hidden pressure.

His feeling when he conveyed 『I love you』 to Lisha before this was of course not a lie but——.

「Rosa..... Is this perhaps, the scene of carnage thing that I heard from rumor?」

「Can you not ask that to me.....」

The red haired girl shrugged at Soffice's question.

「Something must have happened in the middle of that parade huh, just what was it.....」

「I somehow got an idea about it though. That Onii-chan, he's really a sinful man after all.」

Greyfer was seriously not getting it. Beside him Mel was sighing in exasperation.

She was the youngest among everyone here but, it looked like she had sharp sensitivity.

Although, no one was thinking about saying anything.

Nothing would start if they didn't survive through this battle.

Besides, if Uroboros executed world revision again, even the memory they recalled right now would be forgotten without a trace.

「Alma too, you knew about the truth huh. I put you through troubles.」

「It's fine. After all my wish for revenge to Aunt Raffi and Onee-sama is already gone completely. I was thinking that I absolutely won't forgive you too for a long time though. But now I noticed once more that it's really stupid.」

Even these two who betrayed the great hero Atismata also lived in suffering and overcame their past. Alma learned that.

And then, now that she had her existence accepted, she had no reason at all to resent her big sister Lisha.

「Lizsharte. More importantly, now that we have grasped Fugil's movement, we have to decide our action from here.」

The captain of Syvalles Celis coughed lightly and urged the talk to progress.

Now that Lisha had been freed from the binding of perception, they had to ask her to show them the way.

The opponent was the greatest and strongest Ragnarok, but at the same time it was also her stepmother.

「I have resolved myself. I have to stop Haha-ue without fail. As the princess of the New Kingdom, as the daughter who love that person, I have the responsibility to do so.」

Everyone silently looked down hearing Lisha's determination.

It was a choice that was hard to choose, but there was no other way than that.

Even Aeril who had the knowledge as a Lord and knew in detail about the Ruins and Sacred Eclipse more than anyone couldn't tell anything to Lisha after all.

「Do we know about the Sacred Eclipse—her majesty Queen Raffi's location?」

「I think she might be in the north of the lake where we confirmed the rule of this battle at the beginning. I have confirmed it using Radar but, that place is the point where the reactions from Abysses were cut off.」

Airi answered Celis's question.

Airi still couldn't handle Drag-Ride to act as a key combatant, but it seemed she was already fully capable to take the role of managing information.

「The position where the Center is hidden huh, is it a coincidence..... No, perhaps she also knows. That that place is the place that will become the starting point where the switch of world revision is pushed.」

「.....」

They thought that the ego of Raffi who rampaged and attacked both ally and enemy in the Ancient Forest was already absorbed by Sacred Eclipse and it was lost.

Even so, it felt like she was predicting the objective of Lux and others instinctually even now.

「The problem is whether to to avoid her majesty and head to the Center first or not. What do you think about that Nii-san, Aeryl-san?」

Airi suggested a choice.

In order to investigate the weak point of Uroboros that Fugil controlled, they heard a story from memory recording of Arshalia in an Avalon's facility called Archive.

Now that Archive was destroyed due to El Fajura's obstruction, they could only hear about the story's continuation at the Center.

But, in the end they still couldn't obtain any helpful information.

There was also no positive proof that they could obtain.

Perhaps they might only invite the risk of breaking up their battle strength by getting fixated in the memory recording's information.

Although the members in this place had taken rest, they were still far away from being in perfect condition.

Either way, in order to stop the world destruction, they had to connect with the Center's system and gave the order to stop the operation of Sacred Eclipse.

However, Raffi who was controlling the system of Avalon at present was fusing completely with Sacred Eclipse itself.

In any case, the process of waiting for Raffi herself collapsing first or defeating her by themselves became necessary.

「Then, there ain't any way except defeating the queen first ain't it?」

「Agreed. In our current condition we'll only get defeated if we split our force.」

The Seven Dragon Paladins of other countries, Greyfer and Mel expressed an extremely logical opinion.

However, there was hesitation inside Lux.

(I have resolved to defeat her majesty Queen Raffi. But—)

Inside Lux there wasn't just the thought of escaping the danger before them, but also his objective ahead of it.

But, should he ask everyone to accompany him until that far?

While Lux was worrying about that.

「—Lux, you decide it. What should we do, you're the one who grasp the circumstance of the battle this time more than anyone.」

Urged by Lisha, Lux took a deep breath.

There was no time.

If Raffi rampaged and headed to the New Kingdom, an endless slaughter would start.

And then, Lux also had to tell them his other wish—.

「Everyone, will you hear me out? About my thinking, my wish.」

Lisha, Krulcifer, Philuffy, Celis, Airi, the Triad, the people from the Academy.

Greyfer, Mel, Rosa, Soffice, the cooperators from Seven Dragon Paladins.

Alma and Aeryl who worked as Azure Division members. Lux looked around at all of them and talked.

Everyone who in the past had different objective and way of thinking, everyone whose perception was rewritten by world revision, they became united like this. Even just that fact was a miracle.

Lux decided to believe in that miracle.

「There isn't any need to ask that at this point. After all everyone here believe and idolize Lux-samaa.」

「The meaning of 『idolize』 might be a little different in your case though.....」

Rosa looked up at Lux with passionate and intoxicated gaze. Soffice retorted beside her.

Lux made a conflicted wry smile while talking about the last mission.

About combining the power of everyone here and saved the world.

Inside the scenery that was starting to snow hard, a single Drag-Ride was advancing slowly through the Ancient Forest.

After confirming that this war had been settled, three people started moving.

There was one person each on both shoulders of the four legged Drag-Ride Drake. They were traveling in such way.

「Fuu..... It's freezing as expected. Even though I'm wearing this stupidly expensive fur coat.」

「Then, please wait quietly in the hideout.」

「Sorry, I'm making you braving danger like this. I always give you trouble.」

「That's not what I mean. It doesn't matter what happen to me. I'm concerned about your health, Magialca-sama.」

The young man wearing pilot suit and piloting the Drake that he was equipping let out a sigh with expression that had resignation mixed in.

Magialca learned from her subordinate's report several hours ago that the battle had ended. She then asked her aide Lolotte that he wanted to ascertain this battle with her own eyes.

Of course, because Magialca couldn't equip Drag-Ride with her current state, she came here really just to watch, but with his master's usual whimsical conduct, it went without saying that Lolotte put several times more effort than usual to stop her.

Even so, Lolotte was unable to refuse her because he was greatly in the debt to her his master.

Magialca who was greedy for money and taking the style of the strong eating the weak purchased Lolotte who was the son of parents who failed in their business and committed suicide.

However, Magialca never did anything cruel to Lolotte and only developed his strong point and granted him a purpose of life by being her secretary.

Magialca also supported several other young men with childish look that was to her preference, but they were people who she saved from misfortune due to various circumstances. And she also didn't force them to become hers by pushing debt of gratitude to them.

She was frank, whimsical, and selfish, but she was also bright, strong, and tough. Lolotte loved his master who was like that more than anyone, but exactly because of that he didn't want to deliberately send her to a battlefield.

It was unknown whether Magialca knew that feeling of Lolotte but, with a suggestive smile she,

「Yoruka. You too say something to him. My ears are unbearably itchy from all the preaching.」

「Me, telling him?」

The girl in pilot suit riding on the left shoulder of the Drake that Lolotte was piloting tilted her head with a puzzled smile.

She too also had used up her strength and collapsed until now, but when Magialca invited her before she departed, she readily consented accompanying them.

Lolotte got the feeling that asking about common sense to this girl who possessed a unique way of thinking was a mistake in itself, but he was slightly curious about her reaction.

「Let's see. I believe that what the aide-san is saying is quite right.」

「Eh.....!？」

「What?」

Yoruka's answer that was said smoothly made both Lolotte and Magialca to open their eyes wide in surprise.

They never even imagined that she would agree with Lolotte's argument.

Because if it was Yoruka, they thought that she would answer she had no hesitation at all to brave any danger if it was for the sake of accomplishing her lord's objective.

「Is this perhaps, a human heart is blooming inside of her thanks to Lux.....?」

「Yes. I'm surprised.....」

「Or perhaps, it's an after-effect from her fight against Automata before this.....」

In respond to Yoruka who was making a proper statement, Magialca and Lolotte were nonchalantly saying horrible things but—, Yoruka herself only treated their conversation as a random breeze.

「That's right isn't it? Deliberately heading toward danger at this kind of time is just—」

「No, that's not what I mean.」

Yoruka lightly denied Lolotte's agreeing remark.

「Eh, then, you mean about the part of me saying that it doesn't matter what happen to me, but I want Magialca-sama to be safe——」

「That's also not it.」

Yoruka kept sporting a refreshing smile while once more denying Lolotte's statement smoothly.

And then, she gave her answer before she was asked.

「Those two answers should be one. It's our duty to protect our lord's safety, but granting them their wish is also our duty. It'll be to my satisfaction if I'm used for that.」

「So this is what people called to fall in love is to lose. Hahaha, you're really easy to understand.」



「.....」

Seeing Magialca agreeing with an indecent smile, Lolotte sighed in exasperation.

However, she was right.

It was just exactly like Yoruka and Magialca said.

It wasn't because of obligation like contract. To be devoted to one's lord was something like that.

In the first place, people tended to think of Magialca as an eccentric character from a glance, but she was a woman who liked rational decision.

Surely she had her reason to personally come this far when she couldn't even move properly.

That was what Lolotte thought. It was then,

「——Yoruka-san!? There is Abyss's response!」

「I understand.」

Lolotte saw the radar's reaction and raised his voice.

He didn't even need to ask Yoruka who was riding on the Drake's left shoulder, she jumped down on the snow-covered ground and deployed her Divine Drag-Ride.

Although the battle on the whole had ended, this Ancient Forest had been turned into battlefield.

It wouldn't be strange for some Abyss to appear here.

However——.

「.....Why, is she here?」

Lolotte was speechless when he saw the shadow that appeared ahead of his gaze.

A figure wearing an extravagant dress with a part of her front hair changing into silver color.

Sacred Eclipse——Queen Raffi was there.

On the other hand, at the campsite that was making use of the site of the destroyed Shelter, Lux was finishing their preparatory meeting.

The plant that Lux suggested was to seize the Center as expected.

He along with Aeryl and Lisha would enter inside the Center and used the recording medium they obtained in the Garden to activate the artificial intelligence of Arshalia.

On top of that they would search for Uroboros's weak point with the objective of stopping it from functioning.

「However, I can't comprehend it. Putting aside Queen Raffi who is losing her ego, it's unexpected that Fugil would leave this place so easily.」

Airi wearing a pilot suit muttered doubtfully while sitting opposite of Lux.

Although setting the Grand Force in the Garden was an indispensable requirement to perform the world revision, but doing it in that way certainly felt too careless.

But, Lux somehow got an idea about the reason of it.

Not only the Automata Arshalia was staying behind, surely Fugil wanted Lux and Raffi to fight till the end.

Fugil's objective in the end was to watch over where the path that human chose was heading to after all.

「But, it doesn't change the fact that right now is the chance of a lifetime. Even those who has recover somewhat so they can move their body need to take part.」

Celis too also continued the talk like that.

The main group that would head to the Center consisted of Lux, Lisha, Celis, Philuffy, and Aeryl.

The remaining members would be entrusted to maintain their temporary base the Shelter with Airi taking the lead.

In addition, Soffice and Rosa, and also Alma, Airi, and the Triad had recovered until the point where they could barely handle using Drag-Ride, but they couldn't really be counted as fighting strength.

The members whose names weren't mentioned were naturally would stay behind under the protection of the latter group.

Because of that the ability to detect the enemy's approach without overlooking anything and cutting open a path would be indispensable.

「Then, we're going. I'll leave this place to you, Alma.」

「Yes. Be careful, Onee-sama.」

After the sisters exchanged a short talk, Lux and others departed toward the Center.

But, when Airi who remained behind operated her Drake and checked the radar, she spontaneously gasped in shock.

『 This is....., Abysses are appearing around us. Be careful, Nii-san——!』

『-!?』

『 What is the meaning of this? The Abysses in this area had been absorbed by the Sacred Eclipse hadn't it?』

Tension ran through the group of Lux and others after receiving the Dragon Voice from Airi.

『 No, if they were absorbed, then it should be possible for Sacred Eclipse to give birth to them back. Most likely the Sacred Eclipse carefully selected several Abysses with ability that suited this situation and created them but——』

Lux hesitated hearing what Aeryl pointed out.

He wondered whether it would be alright to leave the other group like this.

『 Lux-chi, you go ahead! The enemy's number isn't many, we'll take care of this pla——.....-!』

Right after Tllfur cut in and urged him like that, she caught her breath.

『 That's, impossible!』

『 ——How, can this be!』

Both Sharis and Noct leaked out stiff voice.

Raffi appeared in the campsite right after Lux's group headed to the Center.

「Don't tell me, the main body's clone!? It was already created?」

Alma readied her weapon in bewilderment.

In contrast the girl smiled with a fearless gaze.

「Raffi. I don't think it's possible but don't tell me, you're—. Still maintaining your ego?」

「.....」

The main body of Raffi that was standing in front of the large tree where the Center was sleeping underground didn't answer.

But, she was already witnessing the girl's plan just now. How she stretched out root made from flesh from her body and created Abyss.

She chose the tactic for getting rid of Lux's group that was heading here with certainty and carried it out.

「I see. So this means that your battle as a king is continuing? Then, I'll have to ascertain it with my own eyes.」

Automata Arshalia was focusing on her role to observe this battle just like Fugil ordered her to.

This was the last trap that was set up by Raffi's remaining consciousness that was already mostly gone.

Would Lux be able to slip through it?

This was the last exchange of tactic where his qualification as king was questioned.

Lux, Lisha, Philuffy, Celis, and Aeryl, the five of them listened to the Dragon Voice that was sent by the Triad at the rear and felt shakened.

「Lux-kun. This is bad! If we don't return quickly, Airi-chan will—. Queen Raffi came directly to our base.」

Aeryl who was flying wearing Zahhak urged Lux like that in panic.

Lux too was driven with the impulse to immediately get back, but he endured that feeling with effort.

『Airi, where did that Queen Raffi come from? North or south?』

『Nii-san! Rather than asking that, give us the instruction to deal—』

Lux immediately asked that to his little sister, but Airi was losing her cool.

『That's why, I'm asking this to deal with the situation. If she came from the north then we will turn back. If she came from the south, remember that

the Drake's radar didn't detect her before this.』

『.....!?』

Hearing Lux's voice, Airi recovered her composure.

Several seconds later, she understood the intention of Lux who saw through Raffi's plan.

『Nii-san. It's alright. We——』

『Thank you. Be careful.』

They only exchanged those words, then Lux cut off the Dragon Voice communication.

「Lux, is that alright!? If we don't head to save the little sister and others——」

Lisha asked in panic, in respond Lux nodded briefly.

「Yes. The queen who headed to the Shelter's site is——an impostor Shadow.」

「——So it's something like that.」

At the campsite where the remaining members were on standby.

Sharis who wore EX Wyvern and stood vigilant toward the surrounding spontaneously groaned hearing Airi's instruction.

The Raffi they caught sight just now immediately retreated and into the forest.

But, her reaction was still showing in the radar.

It was hard to see her with their naked eyes, but Raffi wasn't far away from them.

However.

「An impostor.....Shadow, she used an Abyss with mimicry ability, is it? I understand.」

Noct who was also wearing EX Drake also pondered Airi's words and understood it.

Queen Raffi just now was an imposter for diversion.

「I still don't understand it though. At present there are several Abysses attacking over here after all!」

「Me too! Just what in the world is going on!? How can you assert that Sacred Eclipse is an imposter??」

Tillfur and Alma questioned. Airi sighed in exasperation at them.

「It's the problem of the direction where the Sacred Eclipse just now appeared from. Lux's group headed north from here. There was no reaction of Abyss coming from the north until now.」

In Airi's place, Soffice who wasn't wearing Drag-Ride and resting spoke her answer in monotone.

「We were focusing on the Centeer. That means—if it came from the north, then there was a possibility that the radar detection until now would suddenly notify us of her existence.」

Airi also nodded at Rosa's explanation.

「The enemy came from the south—. In other words, she came from behind us. That means she purposefully took a detour so that we wouldn't detect her approach. She purposefully did such thing because she had a reason that she didn't want to get found until she was right before us.」

「She want to confuse us and divide the combat force heading to the Center. Sacred Eclipse—Raffi's tactic is something like that.」

Mel concluded like that at the end. Then from the south low grade Abysses started to appear bit by bit and advanced here.

「But, Raffi already lost her ego right? Does she still have enough remaining intelligence to carry out such plan?」

「Perhaps, it's something like an instinct. Her majesty should be conscious of Lux-kun by quiet a lot.」

Krulcifer responded like that to Greyfer's murmur.

No voice was raised to deny that opinion.

Burying the bud of the country's rebellion element without anyone noticing.

The resolve as a statesman that didn't care about the method.

At this occasion, Raffi was forming her plan with her mind focused completely to Lux.

Even after her ego was taken over by Sacred Eclipse, her rational thought had been permeating into her body.

However.

「.....」

If they agreed with Krulcifer's conjecture, anyone would be able to imagine what lied ahead of this, but no one could say it out loud.

If Raffi still had the instinct that could form such a plan, then could it be she was also preparing other plan too?

And then, perhaps she had also prepared it? The clones of Sacred Eclipse that shouldn't be able to be created by a lot.

Just now Lux declared that 『no great danger was approaching Airi's group』 .

However if in the worst case, Raffi's following plan was attacking them, then this time the members here wouldn't be able to avoid a certain annihilation wouldn't it?

Everyone sensed that but they stayed quiet without mentioning it.

Gradually, the shadows of Abysses at the surrounding were approaching. They mustered their courage while feeling scared.

Lux's group headed to the Center in a straight line.

「.....」

Lux, Lisha, Celis, Philuffy, and Aeryl too—no one was saying even a word.

They understood that the next time they encountered something, the battle against Raffi would begin.

「Haha-ue.....」

A word toward Raffi naturally slipped out from Lisha and she faltered with her words.

The Sacred Eclipse was already starting to rampage.

She had to stop it. She was feeling that responsibility more than anyone else.

「Lisha-sama. I have no intention to make you shoulder this by yourself. I and also everyone are with you.」

Lux flew right beside the princess who was shivering in fear while giving her a push on the back with his words.

「.....Yeah, thank you.」

Those were just some causal words but, it was a medicine that was the most calming for Lisha right now.

「Just a bit more. It's just around 100 ml until we come out at the place where the Center is located underground!」

When Aeryl told everyone that, they braced themselves.

They knew that there was reaction of Abyss at this direction, but there wasn't any user of special equipment Drag-Ride who could use radar in their group right now. So they couldn't grasp the situation.

Before long they would get out of the dense forest.

They could only grasp the situation the instant they could see clearly and moved into action from there.

「The forest will end soon, prepare yourself!」

Everyone nodded at Lisha's words and strengthened their vigilance, right after that.

「——!?!」

An abnormal sight that blew away their resolve until now leaped into their sight.

Someone soaked with blood was bending on the ground of the site of crumbling shrine. It was Raffi.

And then, the one stabbing her with a Sword Device was Fugil Arcadia.

Everyone's thought stopped for a few moment.

Was Raffi also got dealt with by Fugil just like how he killed the Lord Listelka?

Should they help her?

The instant their decided action's objective was shaken and they entered a confused state.

A rustling sound came from the bush behind them.

「——!?! That's a fake! Be careful at behind us!」

The same like the trick that Lux saw through before this, this was the Abyss called Shadow that had the ability to mimic human.

That Abyss was created and positioned beforehand to create a copy of Fugil and Raffi themselves.

They were made to focus at the sight before them so they would be taken by surprise.

As though to prove that, a young Raffi wearing dress appeared from behind.

She sported a faint smile and leaped with her hand lunging at Lux like a sword. Lux reflexively swung his great sword in that moment.

Zaguu-.....!

「Wha.....!？」

The humanoid Ragnarok Sacred Eclipse possessed a terrifying endurance.

Lux swung an attack filled with the strength to go through that. But the opponent's torso was easily bisected that Lux got bewildered instead.

「To think that you will get tricked that easily. Even a figurehead queen like me has grown a lot.」

「——!？」

Wrong.

The Raffi that appeared from behind Lux and others was the impostor Shadow.

That Fugil was also an imposter, but the Raffi that was stabbed onto the ground was the real one.

Because he noticed that his focus was concentrated to the main body of Sacred Eclipse. Because of that he fell into a trap.

Her sweet whisper invaded his brain. His consciousness was dimmed and blown away.

「This is bad.....! She is, using, archdemon Iblis's mental pollution!」

It was already too late when Aeryl grasped the situation.

Raffi acted the strange situation not for tricking and taking Lux's group by surprise, but to attract their attention.

What waited after that was the power of Ragnarok that performed mental pollution through the five senses.

The ability of the strongest Sacred Eclipse was the control of the strength of all seven Ragnarok.

(The ego of Queen Raffi is returning. Don't tell me—!)

「That's right Lux.」

A sweet and kind voice, Raffi's whisper invaded into the brain and led him astray.

Sacred Eclipse devoured humans, integrated their consciousness, and rampaged. It was progressing to a rampaging state.

But, it was Raffi's act to make them think that she was losing even her rational thinking.

「I'll have you return her. I can't entrust my daughter, Lisha to you.」

A poisonous dark smile appeared on the face of blood soaked Raffi who was standing up.

Lisha was a person who understood her, her daughter that was her reason of living.

Raffi who noticed that her daughter was taken away from her was showing hatred and anger.

Or perhaps it was the emotion called love.

「Damn, it.....it's already」

The minds of Aeryl, Celis, and also Lisha were polluted. Their consciousness was getting distant.

Philuffy was the only one resisting that attack.

「How unexpected—. You are the only one on guard from paying attention to me and closed your eyes beforehand. Is your ear also not listening? Is that too a power of Abyss?」

「It already vanished, queen-sama. The Abyss inside me dissolved into my body.」

The power of body strengthening that Philuffy obtained from Baptism.

By using the power to control her own flesh body, she controlled the seed of Ragnarok that fused with a part of her body and dissolved it.

Therefore, the current Philuffy couldn't do Abyss transformation.

However—the strength that she possessed wasn't lost.

「Is that so. You too were also placed in a harsh destiny. But, in the end you were someone who were saved. You aren't like me, someone who wasn't saved.」

「You too, were saved. You only didn't notice and ran away.」

「.....」

Philuffy wasn't shaken even against Raffi's provocation and replied right away.

In order to escape from Iblis's mental pollution, Philuffy consciously controlled her body and closed her sense of hearing and smell.

She decreased her sight until the necessary minimum and watched Raffi's lips only to comprehend what she said.

「I thought that you would be able to understand me. The bitterness of being able to do nothing except shouldering your sin by yourself—」

The main body of Raffi that fused with Sacred Eclipse, the girl in dress was slowly walking near.

Philuffy moved her gaze to Raffi's shadow, predicted her movement and skated.

Gou-!

Typhon smashed through the wall of air and skated with explosive speed.

She fired Howling Roar before started running to hold Raffi back.

She fired Pile Anchor from both her shoulders right after that toward Raffi.

—But, in that instant, Raffi's figure vanished from in front of her.

When Philuffy opened her eyes slightly in surprise, Raffi was circling to her back.

Not toward Philuffy's back, but to Lux who was standing still at the rear.

Instant teleportation that leaped through space.

Using the ability of Ragnarok, Deus ex Machina, Raffi switched from defense to offense.

「.....-!?!」

「It's enviable isn't it. A hero like him, a great man like my big brother. I—can't become like them. I had no way of protecting this country except by transforming this body into monster.」

Raffi made the tips of her nails glinted and swung her hand like a sword. She aimed at the throat of Lux who was wearing Bahamut and swung down to lop his head off.

Right before that, Philuffy fired Pile Anchor from her elbow.

「—I see, so you plan to stop me or move Lux away? But, it's too slow.」

「.....-!」

Because Philuffy herself ran forward with all her power, when she fired her wire to behind, the distance was getting farther away as much as she moved and it wouldn't reach.

Therefore, Raffi said that even if she got hit by Philuffy's attack, she would prioritize killing Lux even then.

「Lu, chan.....!」

At that time when Philuffy raised a sorrowful voice, Raffi's hand was swung down.

She tried to reap Lux's life with the body of Ragnarok that would tear apart even mithryldite armor easily. In that instant.

Zari.....!

Raffi's sword hand tore apart only Bahamut's barrier and slashed empty air.

At the very last second, the finger nails only grazed the neck and Lux dodged the attack by shifting his body.

「—Uu!」

「HAAAAAAH!」

The hollow expression vanished and Lux's eyes snapped wide open. He twisted his Drag-Ride to half rotate while landing a horizontal slash on Raffi's back with his great sword.

Hit by a force that would sever the average Abyss or armor, she was blown away while crashing through several trees.

「Haa, haa.....! Thank you, Phi-chan!」

「I'm glad.....」

Lux managed to narrowly escaped death when there was only less than a second left.

Red blood tricked slowly from the skin of his scratched neck.

「U, I, am.....」

「What, happened.....」

「I, what in the world——」

Celis, Lisha, and then Aeryl were waking up from the influence of the mind pollution.

「——I see, so the Howling Howl that looked like it was to hold me back was actually to cut off the sound from me. In order to release the other people from the mental pollution.」

Raffi who noticed the intention of Philuffy's action spoke out from the other side of the dense trees.

In other words the trick was something like that.

Just like in the battle against Iblis, if someone received Baptism, they would be able to resist the mental pollution to some degree.

And so, Raffi made the mental pollution to succeed by taking them in surprise.

The sound, light, touch, smell that she emitted.

The important pollution component that was carried out through the five senses was severed by the sonic wave of Howling Roar.

Because of that, Lux and others who had received Baptism were able to recover their consciousness.

(However, that was dangerous. If I was late just for an instant, I would have died.....!)

He once more keenly felt the dreadfulness of a complete Sacred Eclipse.

Guessing from Listelka's words, there was no one who was able to defeat Sacred Eclipse at this state.

But, if they didn't defeat it, the remaining survivors from both camps in this place would also get killed.

Including Lux's comrades too.

Then—there was no other choice than winning.

He could only exert all his strength.

「—fu」

Raffi in her young girl form smiled as though she had seen through the determination of Lux who was facing her.

「How astonishing. To believe that you can oppose me after merely dodging the ability of Iblis alone.」

A pair of wings clad in flame stretched out from Raffi's back.

She flew sharply using only her body and fired feathers of flame like arrows.

「—That's the flame ability of Ragnarok Phoenix!」

Aeril muttered, at the same time flame arrows poured down like a heavy rain.

The feathers that were burning using special oil wouldn't vanish even if they were fired into armor.

If their flesh body was stabbed then that would be a serious affair.

In addition it also became a barrier for Raffi herself. It would be extremely hard for them to switch into offense.

「Haha-ue—please stop! You are being controlled by Sacred Eclipse!」

Her stepdaughter Lisha dodged the attack while speaking to persuade Raffi.

But, Raffi was curt toward that.

She only turned her red eyes that were clouded black toward Lisha.

「Lisha, it's you who are being tricked. By Lux Arcadia who is turning his blade toward the New Kingdom. There is no way I can entrust you to him. I'm the only one who can guide you as a princess.」



「.....-!」

Lisha's expression twisted from the words of Raffi who was completely dyed with dark thought.

While the rain of fire feathers that were pouring endlessly were obstructing almost everyone including Lux, a domain of light was expanding from a single point.

「——Divine Gate!」

The Divine Raiment of Lindwurm that Celis was wearing was deployed. She teleported instantly behind Raffi.

But, it seemed Raffi had predicted even that. Giant wings that were clad in flame blocked Celis and attacked her.

「I have also predicted that you will counterattack like that.」

Celis lunged using Lightning Lance in godspeed after seeing Raffi's counterattacking motion.

She didn't intercept the flame wings. She intentionally didn't neutralize that attack by twisting her body and stabbed the tip of the assault spear into Raffi's back.

「——Gi, AAAaAa!」

Raffi whose back was stabbed writhed in agony. The flame wings were erased.

The super reaction speed that Celis obtained from Baptism.

Raffi was hit fully by her attack, but Celis who landed the attack was receiving shock inside her heart.

(——Lightning Flash, doesn't pierce through!)

She almost misunderstood because Raffi's outer appearance was a human girl, but her flesh was abnormally hard. Let alone a normal Abyss, her flesh could be compared with a Ragnarok.

The feedback was like she just hit several hundred Abysses that were compressed into one.

She aimed her attack at the core, but her lance only pierced through the skin before stopping.

(But, if it's now when she is fully hit by the electricity!)

Whether they were living organism or machine, their movement could be temporarily sealed with this attack.

Then there was no doubt that right now was a good chance.

Thinking that Celis tried to land even more lightning attack. But in that instant——!

「Celis! Get away from Haha-ue!」

「Tsu.....!?!」

She noticed that the tip of Lightning Lance that stabbed Raffi was freezing.

She was covered with armor of ice using the freezing ability of Ragnarok Fenrir the moment she was stabbed.

「How impolite for a mere daughter of the four great nobles.」

With a fierce glare Raffi formed a wicked smile and struck Lindwurm's armor by swinging her arm behind.

Just with that, Celis's barrier was penetrated and a part of her armor was broken. She was blown away.

「Uh, ah.....!」

「Celis-senpai!」

Raffi's counterattack was something light that was done hastily, but it was filled with the power of a preposterous mass.

It wasn't far different from the sure kill attack that was launched by other gigantic Ragnarok.

——No, her power easily surpassed that.

Lux considered saving Celis who was sent flying in the air, but Aeryl beside him stopped him.

「Lux-kun! There isn't any time to cover for her! If we falling behind against that Sacred Eclipse, we'll be killed in turn!」

「.....!」

Lux was feeling that danger on his skin even without Aeryl telling him that.

Even when he aimed at the opening from Raffi attacking Celis and slashed using his great sword from her back, that attack was repelled

lightly.

「Wha-!?!」

A thick spherical armor of ice.

The protection wall that was created using Fenrir's ability froze the surface of the great sword just from an instant of contact.

If his Drag-Ride touched it directly, his whole body would be frozen completely in just several seconds.

It was a power that made him felt that much threat.

「Lisha-sama, long range attack!」

「I get it!」

But, the formation of ice armor was the proof that her movement became dull.

Lisha instantly judged that and fired a bombardment with Seven Heads.

—But, Raffi's figure was erased the moment it hit.

「First is you, Lord. Zahhak's Divine Raiment that caused forgetfulness is troublesome after all. Before you use it—I'll finish you off.」

「Tsu.....!?!」

Aeril who was approached by Raffi immediately tried to escape by leaping behind.

The Breath Whip that she had was a mid-range weapon, so it was hard for her to immediately counterattack, that was why she retreated but—.

That too was within Raffi's expectation.

「—Yggdrasil.」

Several sharp plant roots extended out like spear from the tip of Raffi's hand toward Aeril.

Aeril couldn't completely avoid the roots that spread out to radiating direction and she became a victim of the spears.

「Uh, gu.....!?!」

She twisted her flank at the last second and avoided getting pierced through, but her hands and legs were pierced.

It already became difficult for her to fight just from the intense pain.

「Aeril!」

「Lux-kun, now.....!」

Aeril gasped in pain, at the same time she dispelled Zahhak's armor.

「——」

Instantly, Lux who was in a distance attacked Raffi fiercely with a speed that the eye couldn't follow.

「——Reload on Fire? Since when..... I see.」

It was painful that Aeril got defeated, but Lux somehow made it in time with activating his Divine Raiment.

No, in a sense it was the ideal situation.

Using Zahhak's Divine Raiment Brain Hack that stole the designated memory information from the target, until now Raffi was made to forget that Lux was activating his Divine Raiment several seconds ago.

The current Raffi wasn't on her guard against receiving attack from Lux who was at a distance.

Lux didn't let go of that opening. He accelerated and End Action was driven into her body.

——*DO-! DODODODODODO!*

The consecutive sure kill slashes that didn't pause even for an instant were attacking with a speed that eye couldn't follow.

Raffi had the power of endless regeneration from Ragnarok Poseidon.

As long as she had life force remaining, she would recover fully in just several seconds. To smash through that undying body, he could only cut her with speed and destructive power that surpassed that recovery ability.

He planned it beforehand with Aeril using Dragon Voice and chose this teamwork quickly while taking into consideration the possibility of their defeat.

「——HAAaAAAH.....!」

And then, the current Lux was compressing his concentration using Baptism and it became possible to use his Divine Raiment and secret technique at the same time.

That absurdly powerful attack broke through Raffi's unbelievably hard skin, tore her apart, and smashed her bone.

From outside it was the gruesome sight of someone carving apart a living thing with the appearance of human. Lisha almost averted her gaze from it but she somehow endured.

(I can't avert my gaze. I have to back up Lux! I can feel the pain later!)

Lux's consecutive slashes that attacked like a heavy rain had numbered more than several hundred just in a few seconds, but the moment it ended would soon arrive.

In the case that Sacred Eclipse's core couldn't be destroyed even then, she could only finish her off using the combo of Suppressor and Seven Heads.

Lisha took a stance to await for the chance.

Philuffy also skated in her Typhon behind Lux in preparation to back him up.

And then, the tip of Chaos brand that Lux wielded finally exposed the core of Sacred Eclipse.

The super accelerated time of Reload on Fire was already passing, but Raffi was still breathing.

「.....Lu, x.....help」

Raffi's flesh was torn up and her body was in tatter. Her faint voice could be heard, but Lux gritted his teeth and resolved himself.

He couldn't be carried away by his emotion.

She was already transforming into a different existence from Raffi.

If she wasn't defeated here, they wouldn't be able to win the next time.

With that determination, he swung his great sword heartlessly.

He had resolved himself from a long time ago. There was no hesitation in him after this far.

Naturally, he was also keeping in mind of any kind of counterattack.

While Raffi was receiving attack continuously like this, she should also be unable to use the attack reflection of Ragnarok Metatron.

But,

(—And yet, what is this feeling.....?)

The hands of Lux that were piloting Bahamut was receiving a strange feedback.

Even though it was through his Drag-Ride, he got the feeling that he was cutting apart a flesh body with his own hand.

The dress burst open. Raffi's body that was torn apart under it was blackening like a Nocturnal.

The two eyes that glinted red were mocking Lux.

「In the end—you won't save me. You will only save those who bring benefit for yourself.」

Raffi's mouth wasn't letting out any voice.

But, her thought resounded directly in his brain.

Even so Lux didn't stop his hand, he should continue slashing his sword until the moment he ran out of his strength, until the core was destroyed.

「—It was splendid, Lux.」

「.....-!?!」

Suddenly Raffi whose whole body was dyed jet black looked at Lux and smiled.

When he noticed, the attacks of End Action were dodged and the tip of his great sword was slashing empty air.

Even though he didn't take off his eyes from her even for an instant, how?

「You didn't hold back even for a bit. In order to not let Lisha take the role of defeating me. And then, in order to obtain this country, you resolved yourself to defeat me who fused with Sacred Eclipse and didn't hesitate.」

The voice of Raffi who was right near him sounded distant.

Right after that, the thin arm that she swung pierced Bahamut's armor.

Gogu-!

「Gah.....!?!」

Lux wasn't quick enough to dodge and Raffi's fist hit directly.

The reinforced barrier was easily broken through like paper. Bahamut was struck down with a single attack.

「How can, this be!」

On the other hand, Aeryl whose armor was dispelled and hid behind a rock roughly understood the battle situation and what happened to Lux.

What made the counterattack toward Lux which they thought as impossible to be possible was the simultaneous use of three Ragnarok abilities.

Raffi continued recovering using Poseidon's infinite regeneration while strengthening her body bit by bit using Yggdrasil's adaption strengthening ability.

At the end, she used Iblis's mental pollution through sense of touch across Bahamut's great blade that was cutting her. Originally the effect was faint toward Lux who was focused and possessed the resistance from Baptism, but if it was through dozens of slashes throughout several seconds, the number would compensate for the thin effect.

Of course, because Raffi couldn't concentrate to that ability, it took time, but Lux certainly lost focus for a moment and created a slight opening for Raffi to dodge.

「Lux-kun, get a hold of yourself.....! If you're defeated, then——」

Aeryl ran on the snowy forest ground with a desperate look toward Lux.

But, Bahamut was already dispelled from the falling Lux.

「——! Suppressor!」

Lisha who was awaiting for a chance instantly activated Tiamat's Divine Raiment toward Raffi.

In the beginning she intended to follow after Lux's attack ended, but Raffi easily walked through the gravity field while receiving pressure that would have crushed normal person right away.

「What? Impossible!?!」

Raffi whose whole body was blackened was smiling peacefully.

And then, she fixed her aim at Lisha and leaped through the gravity field.

「——AHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!」

The ground that she kicked was smashed and sinking in round shape.

Even under the pressure of several fold gravity, she closed in to Lisha who was hovering in the air with great speed.

But, the instant she slipped through that gravity field, the tip of wire that looked like snake jaw snapped at Raffi's back.

Philuffy who had rallied herself and lurked inside the forest moved into support.

「Pile Anchor」

Raffi was pulled to below by the overwhelming power of land battle type Divine Drag-Ride.

The instant Lisha thought that, something absurd occurred.

The wire winch that was wrapping around Raffi in high speed got pulled up by her instead toward the sky.

Gun-! The frame of Typhon that boasted really heavy mass was pulled up to the air.

When the distance with Philuffy who was reeled in by the wire shortened, Raffi raised up her fist.

「——Stop, Haha-ue!」

When Lisha yelled, the attack was already finished.

「——!？」

Philuffy who was reeled up to the air with brute force was struck down to the ground with one attack.

Finally Lisha became the only one who could fight at the present.

She completely thought that Raffi would continue cornering them without mercy but, her expression suddenly turned gentle.

She talked toward Lisha as though to chide her gently.

「Lisha, I will forgive everything. About how you got tricked by Lux. Even I had experienced getting deceived by Waybra. I understand your feeling well.」

「.....」

Was her awareness of human still remaining, or perhaps her side as a mother was appearing strongly because she was facing Lisha? It was

unknown which was the case but, anyway right now Raffi who should have lost her ego was miraculously holding up a conversation.

「Haha-ue—why are you doing something like this!? Erasing people's memory, slaughtering people in your way with no question asked. Is that really the form of the ideal new country that you are wishing for!?!」

Raffi didn't answer Lisha's pained yell.

She only kept smiling and expressed her own feeling.

「You swore to protect the New Kingdom together with me. You understood me who was weak, lonely, and suffered more than anyone and stayed at my side. You idolized me who couldn't have a child of my own as your stepmother.」

A deep feeling, like the snow piling up on this Ancient Forest.

Raffi put her feeling at the end of her words and stared at Lisha.

「I was happy. I was reassured. With you becoming my daughter, my whole self was saved. Exactly because of that, I was scared that I can't protect you. The Sacred Eclipse choosing to reside in this body must be a miracle from that.」

「Don't tell me, Haha-ue you——」

「Yes, more than the fear of my sin exposed and I became reduced into nothing, I was more scared of losing the path where I can aim for the new ideal country together with you. That's why, I got rid of those who opposed me. Humans are foolish and weak after all. They fear losing what they have, the fear failure, they fear risking danger, they persecute and torment others. Like that they tried to steal the New Kingdom that I aimed for. That was why——」

Her crimson eyes turned toward Lisha and Raffi continued.

「——For my sake, and also for your sake, all enemies in our way has to be destroyed. And then I will erase the people's memory. Like that, I and you will be able to become the ruler of a beautiful, ideal, and peaceful New Kingdom. We will never feel the fear of someone taking away anything from us anymore.」

「Haha-ue.....」

Lisha's face turned darkly depressed seeing the expression of Raffi talking in exaltation.

—She was sad.

Because Lisha who was in a position that was similar with Raffi understood her feeling to a painful degree.

If, Lux didn't appear in front of Lisha.

If, it became exposed how she turned traitor to the Old Empire.

If she was unable to overturn that fate due to her powerlessness.

She might be forced to let go of the worth of her life that she was finally able to obtain.

She might lost sight of herself after obtaining the overwhelming power like Sacred Eclipse.

「If it's you, you must have realized already that it's impossible to defeat me aren't you?」

Raffi intentionally received Lux's attacks on her body to strengthen her body to the limit using Yggdrasil's ability.

She was already in the level that the opposition of Tiamat alone already wouldn't amount for much.

Perhaps the chance of victory was already outrageously low.

「Lisha, if you throw away your sword and surrender, if you don't get in my way until the next world revision succeed, I will overlook everyone in this place. You understand which is the correct decision for a princess who protect a country don't you?」

「I—」

The more Lisha obtained the self-awareness as a princess of New Kingdom, the more she realized the difficulty of protecting the system.

Including how the system couldn't be maintained without compromising or handing over something sometimes.

But—,

「Haha-ue, I am your ally until the end.」

Raffi took Lisha's words as declaration of surrender and her smile deepened.

However, the attack of Legion from all directions at the next moment made her eyes snapped wide open.

Gaun-!

The projectile weapons attacked Raffi, but the body that was strengthened by Yggdrasil wasn't scratched or shaken at all.

But, she realized the truth that she was being opposed and shadow fell on her eyes.

「Did you mistake your control? Or else, did I mishear your words just now?」

「Both aren't the case Haha-ue, I exchanged an oath with you! That when one of make a mistake, the other will notice that wrong, point it out, and stop it! I won't—betray you! I swear I will stop you!」

Lisha activated Suppressor in full power once more and bound Raffi's movement even if only slightly.

Seeing that, Lux recovered his strength and stood up.

「Lux-kun, it's impossible. Don't be reckless!」

「It's not reckless..... If I don't go. I have to, protect Lisha-sama——」

A despairingly dangerous situation.

And yet, just from seeing the master he served, at Lisha's conduct, strength was welling up inside.

It was different from when he was unable to tell her the truth and did a solitude fight.

Right now, there was someone who was sharing Lux's will.

There was someone who was walking together on the same path with him.

Strength was welling up just from that.

He grasped his Sword Device once more and calmed his breathing.

He could still move.

Besides, landing that many attacks on Sacred Eclipse wasn't pointless.

No matter how much she strengthened her body with Yggdrasil's unlimited strengthening and also Poseidon's unlimited regeneration, the energy contained inside that body was limited.

Together with Celis, Philuffy, Aeril, and Lisha.

The five of them combining their strength together and facing the enemy wasn't pointless.

That was why, Lux pushed aside Aeryl who was holding him in her arms and smiled.

「.....I can, still fight. I can still go on, with my own will.」

Once more he compressed his concentration with the ability he obtained from Baptism, and scraped together his slightly remaining strength.

Even if he mustered the strength of his whole body and spirit, one more attack was his limit.

But, he had no hesitation in unleashing that attack.

He was convinced that if it was him right now he would be able to do it.

He summoned Bahamut once more and tightly grasped his Sword Device.

Using tuning—he tried to activate Over Limit that removed all the Drag-Ride limiters, but even his concentration right now was insufficient.

But, a small sound came from behind at that time.

「——Legion!」

「Are you still going to struggle pointlessly? I'm not so free that I can go along with you buying time you know?」

The Legion that Lisha fired were punched and destroyed by Raffi with her bare hand.

All attack already wouldn't work to Raffi who was strengthened to the extreme limit.

「Then what about this! Suppressor!」

「I'm telling you, it's already meaningless Lisha. Your attack won't work. Be obedient for a whi——!?!」

A doubt formed on the face of Raffi who was rushing toward Lisha.

Lisha didn't pressure her with gravity, she applied Suppressor to nullify the surrounding gravity.

In her state that was already in midair, her movement was sealed because there was nothing that she could touch.

Even so, there was no color of fear in Raffi's face.

「Do you intend to seal me just with this?」

「No? I know that I can't win against the current Haha-ue.」

Lisha grinned fearlessly and pointed Seven Heads' muzzle toward Raffi.

With her stamina, this would be her last attack. She would fire it in full power.

「But, we won't lose! I'll leave the rest to you, Lux!」

「.....Fuh, even if you do something like this——」

Vun Raffi's figure vanished and instantly appeared behind Lisha.

With Raffi's endurance, she would only get scratched even if she was hit directly, but if she was hit by the bombardment in the zero gravity area, then she would be blown far away to behind.

Not wanting that, she immediately used teleportation and escaped the influence of the zero gravity, but.

For an instant, Raffi who should have become the strongest immortal creature harbored fear due to a clear killing intent.

「——!?!」

Even further behind Raff who moved behind Lisha, there was one Drag-Ride there that she didn't notice before.

A girl assassin with glossy black hair and bottomless bewitching aura.

The girl who was heavily wounded in the battle against Automata had returned and came until this far.

「——Kirihime, Yoruka? Since when, why?」

The girl who was the user of special equipment type Divine Drag-Ride Yato no Kami shouldn't be able to come until this height that was more than ten ml above ground. That was what Raffi thought.

No, strictly speaking she was able to use Yato no Kami's internal mechanism called KarafumiVoid Step to kick on the air and reached this height, but if she did that then Raffi should have detected it without fail due to the time Yoruka would need to reach this height.

「Don't tell me——」

「Yes. It's exactly like what you think.」

In an instant that didn't take even one second, Raffi felt like she heard Yoruka's words.

The Suppressor from Lisha just now was a follow up after she detected Yoruka's movement.

If the gravity in the area was lightened to the limit, with a single leap Yato no Kami could ascend until the height where Raffi was at.

And then in order to block Raffi's sight and hide Yoruka's presence with a thunderous sound, Lisha poured her remaining power into her bombardment.

「—KokugekiInstant Strike 」

A slash of Yato no Kami attacked toward Sacred Eclipse's core from behind.

Yoruka's unique sure kill sword technique that was unleashed at the moment the opponent's focus was cut off.

But, Raffi whose whole body was already hardened to the very limit wasn't perturbed.

Even after getting hit with a perfect attack, she was guaranteed to be unharmed.

「How many times I have to say it before you understand? No matter how many the like of all of you gathered, the power of Sacred Eclipse is—unbeatable!」

Right after she was hit, Raffi extended both her arms to left and right in counterattack.

The simultaneous attacks by Yggdrasil's roots were directed toward Lisha and Yoruka.

「—!？」

Yggdrasil's roots bended like whip and dealt a precise blow on the Force Core installed inside the shoulder of the Drag-Ride they wore.

Right after that, the power output of the Divine Drag-Ride of the two decreased and they began to descend, at that time,

「—!？」

On the ground below.

From the ground of the shrine site that was thinly covered with snow, there Raffi noticed an existence fixing his aim while looking up to Raffi.

Lux Arcadia.

The young man who Raffi should have defeated and put into a state that was unable to fight just now was wearing Bahamut once more while glaring to the sky.

「Why.....?」

Even though she had definitely broke his willpower, even though she had overcome even his full strength.

Even though she obtained Sacred Eclipse that would destroy the world and Fugil as her ally.

「How, how are you able to stand up? How can you still oppose me?」

There was no one to answer Raffi's monologue.

But, in that instant when Lisha and Yoruka were starting to freefall from the air, a streak of light hit Raffi like an arrow of light.

「—HAAAAAAAAAhAAH!」

ZAGUN-! An impact pierced Raffi's chest and the sound of the sky being cleaved came afterward.

Raffi's body that possessed the toughness that could endure even the super accelerated Bahamut when it was using Over Limit, was easily destroyed with one attack.

「—GU, UuUU!?!」

Right after that, Raffi regained her senses.

With the eyes of Ragnarok, she was able to ascertain Lux's action.

What the Reload on Fire that Lux activated with Over Limit compressed and strengthened until more than ten times, wasn't time.

Although it was the same acceleration, unlike before, it was Bahamut's thruster that was used for flying that was strengthened explosively.

Furthermore its limiter was removed by Over Limit.

Naturally, if Lux's body wasn't strengthened by Baptism, he wouldn't be able to endure the burden.

Therefore, the power of this attack was in different dimension from the consecutive attacks until now that only had its time accelerated.

It wasn't the flow of time that was accelerated, it was Lux and Bahamut themselves that were accelerated by several tens of times. With that the destructive power was increasing until many times over in proportion with the speed.

That—surpassed the endurance of Raffi who went through body strengthening using Yggdrasil's ability.

(No way, no way such thing is.....)

She couldn't possibly think that Lux's plan reached this far.

She also couldn't think that he had the leeway to do this after she dealt an injury that heavy to him already.

But, the super consecutive attacks from End Action and time acceleration that he unleashed at Raffi.

If even that attack, was Lux's scenario than—.

「Aa.....!」

High in the sky where Raffi was looking up to, a jet black Divine Drag-Ride was dancing.

『The Black Hero』 .

Sacred Eclipse was smashed and crumbling, by the legend that destroyed the Old Empire in the past.

The thing that showed her a joyful dream when she was within the abyss of despair, the almighty miracle that could remake the world, was destroyed by human's hand.

「No way, why..... Why——」

There was no one to catch her who was falling from the sky to earth.

But, the impact of her fall was scattered by the snow. Raffi whose body was starting to break was faintly covered by the falling snow.

As though to cover the sin of her wicked human heart.

「Tsu.....!」

On the other hand, Lux who defeated Raffi with just a single super propelled slash of great sword by transforming into a godspeed arrow like lightning also found his whole body in tatter.

The burden pressure and high heat from rising up and breaking through the sound barrier, the recoil from the frame that went past the Drag-Ride's possible movement limit. The consumption of stamina.

All those recklessness became debt that came knocking to his whole body, bringing fierce damage to Lux's body.

It was fortunate that Chaos Brand didn't break, but he was already unable to wear Drag-Ride.

However, a satisfied smile formed on Lux's lips.

Sacred Eclipse—Raffi couldn't be defeated by himself alone.

The one who allowed Lux's Bahamut to enter Over Limit when he didn't even have the spare strength to use tuning was the power of Spell Code from Yoruka who came running just now.

And then, Lisha worked together with Lisha who specialized in fighting alone to lure Raffi's attention away from him.

It was also thanks to Aeril, Celis, and Philufyf who bought time for him.

They wouldn't be able to win if all of them weren't present here.

Lux who had used up all his strength couldn't even protect himself anymore.

However—.

「Lux!」

「Lu-chan」

First Celis who somehow got up again caught Lux in midair, softening them impact, and then they fell again.

At the end Philuffy caught each of their Divine Drag-Ride.

「Haa.....」

Aeril who saw that let out a relieved sigh and collapsed.

Right after that, Celis and Philuffy's Drag-Rides were also dispelled.

Even though this many skilled Drag-Knights were present, not one of them had even a shred of strength remaining.

It told the story of just how fierce the deathly battle against Sacred Eclipse was.

「Thank you, very much..... Celis, senpai, Phi.....chan」

「There is no need for any thanks. More importantly, rest for now.」

Celis held up Lux in her arms while muttering so. Beside her, Lisha who was similarly wasting away started walking.

She headed toward the spot where Raffi whose core was broken just now crased to.

「Lisha.....! Where are you going!?!」

「I.....have to ascertain it with my own eyes. As a princess, as a daughter, I have to see Haha-ue——」

「Tsu.....!?!」

Hearing Lisha's words, Lux also tried to stand up to accompany her.

However, he couldn't put strength into his feet to walk.

When he struggled, Philuffy wordlessly lent her shoulder to Lux.

「.....Uh!」

「Lisha.....! Get a hold of yourself!」

For a moment, Celis looked at Philuffy and Lux with a conflicted gaze, but when Lisha who was walking ahead almost fell, she hurriedly headed toward her and lent her a shoulder.

And then the four of them headed toward Raffi.

Toward the first queen of New Kingdom that they should protect.

The woman who was a victim of the Old Empire.

「Haha-ue, hang on! Please hang in there!」

Raffi's eyes already couldn't see anything.

Heat was rapidly getting taken away from her body that had lost her other half the Sacred Eclipse.

She became unable to even feel that cold.

While everything was melting into the darkness, Raffi heard Lisha's voice.

「Haha-ue!」

(Aa.....)

No one would see her worth. She was used and betrayed.

She existed only to extol someone else's glory and succeeded that person's shadow.

Within Raffi's tragic fate, her meeting with Lisha was her only salvation.

「So you're, safe. I'm glad.....」

Those words were the very first thing that naturally came out.

She was glad her daughter didn't die, that she didn't end up in misfortune.

Thanks to being separated from Sacred Eclipse and its influence to her mind, Raffi could think so from the bottom of her heart.

「But, it's alright. I, don't have the qualification to be called as your mother. After all I was still acting on my own will for a while even after Sacred Eclipse possessed me. Those things, were things I done by my own will.....」

With her eyes closed, Raffi in her young girl form was crumbling from her foot.

「Things like qualification, doesn't matter! I simply want to call you that! You who know my suffering and became my support!」

「.....Is that, so. You're really, kind.」

Raffi kept her eyes closed while letting out tears hearing Lisha's sorrowful yell.

She thought that she would be unhappy forever if she didn't stand at the side of those who rule.

However, someone was looking after her even now that she had lost all her strength. She was happy.

「If it's you then, I can entrust everything to you..... Please be happy, with Lux, and the people who you trust..... Lisha, I love you. For becoming my daughter, I——」

「Yes....., Haha-ue.」

Lisha answered and then she looked down to hide the tears trickling on her cheeks.

Right after that, Raffi became black ashes and vanished.



Epilogue

「——」

The snow was falling and covering the battlefield deeply.

All the traces were covered.

The traces of the deathly battle against the Sacred Eclipse that was the assembly of the fused thoughts of people.

It was painting over the pain of the heart that lost something important.

After watching after Raffi's last moment, Lux and others thought of making contact with the other members who were left behind and joined up with them.

But,

「——It looks like I made it in time.」

Magialca was riding on the shoulder of the Drake being piloted by Lolotte.

She was leading Airi, the Triad, and the members of Seven Dragon Paladins.

「Captain, Magialca..... Why——?」

「What, after provoking all of you so much like that to take action, it would be uncool if I stay behind doing nothing in the last battle wouldn't it? I told the remaining Azure Division members to bring relief supplies here. With this we should be able to relax somewhat.」

Magialca grinned. Behind her more than ten Drag-Knights appeared.

Magialca who secretly came here was targeted by a Shadow that mimicked Raffi, but it seemed Yoruka had taken care of it easily. It was also her who saved Airi and others who got attacked.

Other than that, it seemed they also collected the subordinate Drag-Knights of the four great nobles who charged into this Ancient Forest.

「That's really, a big help.....」

Lux who had no spare strength left smiled.

Lux was indebted to them for taking care of the things that he couldn't manage.

「You said that but, weren't you waiting until Onii-chan defeated Sacred Eclipse? Your timing was too good.」

「Certainly. Perhaps you're unexpectedly still targeting Avalon's legacy.」

Mel gazed at Magialca with a fixed stare, and then Greyfer also got on the topic with a careless tone.

「You guys, be a little more trusting toward other people! We're comrades who had fought together aren't we!」

「When it's you saying that, it sound excessively suspicious.....」

「The more you're speaking, the more I feel it.」

Rosa and Soffice replied at Magialca's objection.

As though to notify the end of the long and very painful deathly battle, the air around Lux suddenly softened down.

With this they were able to prevent the damage from the rampage of Sacred Eclipse for the time being.

They protected the New Kingdom, and the world for now.

「Lux-kun, it's fine to do it after you finish getting treatment and resting. I'm sorry to make you force your body but——」

「Yes, we've to enter the Center of Avalon. Also——someone has to connect with the Center.」

Connecting with the Center.

That was an authority that could only be obtained by someone who was recognized by Avalon's system.

They had to seal Sacred Eclipse so it wouldn't resurrect anymore.

And then, they had to decide one more important thing.

Should they listen to the continuation of the story from the record of the artificial intelligence in the Archive that was left behind by Arshalia at the ancient time.

Currently, Lux couldn't see the Automata Arshalia within his field of vision.

Perhaps she was observing Lux and others from somewhere, or perhaps—.

「Fugil——.....」

Lux called the name of his big brother who wasn't in this Ancient Forest right now.

The scale of this world, the path of the humans.

Would Lux once more face that existence who was like a god controlling those things together with the Sacred Eclipse?

Fugil headed to the Garden to set the Grand Force in there. They likely would have around several hours of time until he returned here.

During that time, he had to resolve himself.

He was going to take the chance to take his last break and talking to his comrades.

Afterword

We finally arrived until volume 18.

Thank you very much for everytime. This is Akatsuki.

The era's name will change soon but, personally for someone lazy like me, I only have the thought like there will be an item added at the list when filling form or hoping that I won't make a mistake when doing paperwork procedure. How troubling.

However when I tried thinking carefully, Bahamut too was inadvertently born at Heisei era, so this work too will experience living in two eras.

When I thought of that, it somehow feel amazing, or rather, perhaps something like this won't happen again from here on. This is two rare situations that happen at the same time.

In any case, I'm grateful that this series can continue until this far.

The story will finally enter the climax, so I have to keep running properly till the end.

If I'm going to make a bit of exposition regarding the birth of a character in technicality, Kirihome Yoruka who is in the cover this time is different from the other heroines, she is a character that was born from my interest. Of course I'm also writing the other characters because I like them, but Yoruka is especially filled with a lot of that component.

I really like how she isn't fitting in with this world but a conviction in her own style is living inside her chest.

And then Airi, actually she didn't exist when I was forming the plan at the early period, but I received a demand that wanted a little sister character and she was born. There was such circumstance but, before I noticed she not only had the role as someone who is knowledgeable of the motive Lux's action and his objective, or as someone who explained the inner working of the routine in the academy, she also go the position as someone who shared

Lux's loneliness. I gradually came to like her. I'm especially pleased with her Drama CD cover and the like. The white tights too.

And now is the thanks corner.

The new illustrator Murakami Yuichi-sama. Thank you very much for the amazing illustrations this time too. I like how Yoruka & Airi at the front cover has their respective traits displayed.

Well then, it will be great if we can meet again at the next volume when the era name has changed.

A certain day of May 2019 *Akatsuki Senri*

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